

Conspiracy theories played down in aftermath of theft of Ashdown papers

Parties tell of 50 office burglaries in two years

BY STEWART TENDLER AND BILL FROST

ALL three main political parties yesterday issued fresh details of more than 50 burglaries against party offices up and down the country over the past two years as calls increased for an enquiry into possible political espionage.

Many party workers refuse to subscribe to conspiracy theories but admitted increasing concern about the level of the burglaries and their computer targets. The cases are being investigated as ordinary crimes inspired by the fact many constituency offices are in buildings with little security and are often equipped with valuable computer equipment.

The earliest Liberal Democrat case was in December 1990 when the offices of the Truro constituency party were broken into although neither the police nor the office staff could work out how the thieves got in.

The burglary was discovered when the constituency organiser, tried to find a collection of 70 computer discs. The discs, containing details of members and party helpers, had been taken with about £20 in stamps but portable office equipment had been left.

Last August the offices were burgled again when the thieves broken in through a skylight. This time they took nothing although they did try to force the locked drawer where the discs had been kept.

In Brecon, the offices used by Richard Lacey, the Liberal Democrat MP for Brecon and Radnor, and his constituency party were broken into last August.

Two computers worth a total of £5,000 were taken and constituency records held on computer disc were also taken. Yesterday Mr Lacey said that at the time the burglary was thought to be the work of someone dealing in stolen computer equipment.

Details of the Truro burglary were passed to Brecon and the CID officers spoke to their opposite numbers in Cornwall to see if there was any connection. The police decided there was not.

The offices of the Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors in Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, have been broken into three times in July, October and November last year. In the first burglary a word processor was taken and the second time equipment to go with the word processor was taken. In both burglaries the offices of voluntary groups sharing the building were also robbed. In November the burglars concentrated on the Liberal Democrats and took a key computer with membership records, ignoring other equipment.

In Bath, the Liberal Democrat office was burgled last October. A front door was broken and internal locked doors were kicked down. On January 23, staff at Paddy Ashdown's constituency office in Yeovil discovered that a computer containing confidential membership records and returns from canvassing had been used. There was no sign of forced entry.

The Liberal Democrat constituency offices for Richmond and Barnes in south London were broken into two weeks ago, on 26 January.

The Conservatives' office in Bradford was burgled in March last year as the full-time agent Val Binney and her team of voluntary workers

nored other computer equipment. Four days ago an office used by Lord Holme of Cheltenham, an adviser to Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, at the offices of the Constitutional Reform Centre in Covent Garden were burgled. A computer and papers were stolen.

Over the past three years 26 Conservative constituency offices have been burgled some of them several times. Conservative Central office said yesterday. The total of break-ins during the period is 39.

Offices in The Wrekin, Shropshire, were raided five times. Each time computer equipment was taken. Burglars also visited the party's offices in Chichester, West Sussex, three times over 18 months. Streatham Conservative Association in south London was raided three times over the same period. The most recent burglary was just over a month ago. Again computer equipment was taken.

The Conservatives' office in Bradford was burgled in March last year as the full-time agent Val Binney and her team of voluntary workers

party's regional agent said cash in the same safe and items of personal jewellery were left. He said: "The theft could be regarded as a 'routine burglary' but any theft of computer equipment and computer records from a political party could be regarded as highly suspicious."

Tory offices at Bath, Chris Patten's marginal seat, also lost computer equipment in a burglary. A regional official said that although there was inadequate evidence to support a conspiracy theory, "perhaps in the light of other recent events, there might be a need to re-examine the circumstances."

John Earl, deputy central office agent for Greater London, said: "Petty thefts from constituency offices have been going on for years and I would suspect that there are lots of burglars sitting on stolen computer discs with no idea what to do with them."

Labour has reported burglaries at constituency offices in Bow and Poplar, Bethnal Green and Stepney, Hornsey and Wood Green, all in London, the party office for the Manchester, Stretford seat and homes of full-time organisers in Islington, north London, and Wigan.

Nine Labour MPs have been burgled, including seven offices at Westminster. Peter Hain, MP for Neath, has accused the security services of supplying stolen information to the government. The Labour incidents include three thefts from Jack Cunningham, the party's campaign manager, and records taken from the office of Marjorie Mowlem, the party spokeswoman on city affairs.

John Prescott had a disc stolen from his research machine after the prime minister ordered an enquiry into a leak of the draft of the Queen's Speech to Mr Prescott.

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Lacey: disks and two computers stolen

The burglar got in through a window at lunchtime and took nothing.

Last weekend the party's offices for the Littleborough and Saddleworth constituency on the edge of Manchester

was broken into and a £500 personal computer, a printer and membership records were taken. The burglar, who forced a door, moved aside a £100 camera on the desk next to the computer and also ig-



Lord Holme: computer and papers taken

prepared for the May local elections. The IBM computer which held the full election plans and the local membership records on its hard-disk was dismantled.

The office of the Leeds North West Conservative Association was broken into last year and the only item stolen was its computer. The discs were taken, a safe broken into and the back-up copies of the disks stolen. Eric Ward the



Mrs Ashdown: knew of affair at the time

Former lover pleads for privacy

BY BILL FROST

PADDY Ashdown's wife and his former lover faced the press on separate London doorsteps yesterday. Mrs Ashdown said that she had known of her husband's affair at the time, while Tricia Howard asked to be set free from intolerable intrusion and pressure.

Ms Howard, aged 48, stood in silence posing for pictures as a solicitor issued a statement on her behalf deploring the zeal with which the tabloid press had pursued the story. She patiently endured the shouts from photographers and ignored invitations such as "Smile a bit more" and "Come on love, give us a beam".

As journalists pushed forward, the sound of toppling photographers' ladders and cursing from the back of the pack all but drowned out the solicitor's voice. Ms Howard endured the ever-more-frantic attentions with a look of grim disdain as he read the statement a second time. "I wish to make clear that I deplore the attempts that have been made by the tabloid press in particular to



Silent pose: Tricia Howard deplored tabloids

profit from the theft of a personal and confidential document which disclosed the existence of this brief relationship and the papers who have asked me to do the same.

"I would like to say that I very much hope that, in return for making myself available to be photographed, my family and I will now be left alone to live a normal life free from intolerable pressures and intrusions."

As the statement was delivered, meat porters from Smithfield Market, close to the solicitor's offices in central London, joined the mêlée. They shouted encouragement to Ms Howard and growled at the press. As the photo session continued, the porters' hostility grew. "An egg was thrown into the crowd

and a voice shouted: 'That's for you scum. Leave the lady alone.' The missile broke against a window, just a few feet from Ms Howard. A few minutes later, Ms Howard retreated inside. Some of the photographers set up camp on the doorstep. "I reckon we'll be on this a while," said one.

Jane Ashdown told journalists camped on her doorstep yesterday that she had known of her husband's affair. "It came as a great shock, but that was five years ago," she said. Her instinct had led her to realise that he was being unfaithful. "When you live in close proximity with a guy for a long time, it is quite easy. You do not need a sixth sense about these things, you just have to be fairly intelligent."

Girl loses mental detention claim

A council was cleared yesterday by a High Court judge of sending a girl in its care to a mental hospital without her consent because of disruptive behaviour at a children's home.

Mr Justice Kennedy said that Kirkcaldy council, in West Yorkshire, had acted within its powers and in the best interests of the girl, aged 12, who was feared to be suicidal. "It seems to me that the local authority [social workers and officials] acted as a team, responsibly keeping each other in touch and behaving as a responsible parent would have done," he said.

Elizabeth Lawson, QC, for the girl and her mother, had said that she had been unlawfully deprived of liberty for 15 days in 1989, and held in an adult psychiatric ward on an informal basis without legal procedures being followed.

The judge said the council was entitled to have the girl assessed.

£50,000 award for train driver

The driver of a mail train who suffered from shock after making an emergency stop at 98mph when a fault caused a signal light to change was awarded £50,000 damages in the High Court yesterday.

Fred Whale, aged 61, who has been unable to work since the incident at Nuneaton station in June 1988, was afraid that the train was about to be robbed or that it might be hit from behind by another train. He had sued the British Railways Board for stress and loss of earnings. The board admitted liability.

Thief cleared of killing PC

A man who admitted stealing from cars was cleared yesterday of killing an off-duty policeman. Derek Johnston, aged 24, of Newcastle upon Tyne, was accused of being the driver of a stolen car that killed PC Duncan Clift in a car park at Hexham, Northumberland, last March.

PC Clift, aged 27, stood in front of the car after he saw its woman owner trying to stop a thief from stealing it. He died of head injuries. Mr Johnston denied being the driver. A jury at Newcastle crown court found him not guilty of murder or manslaughter.

Scargill fails

Arthur Scargill, NUM president, has been dropped as an official of his constituency Labour party after being vice-chairman for 10 years. He failed to be re-elected in competition with five other candidates in Barnsley West and Penistone, South Yorkshire.

CORRECTION

On January 31 we reported a Radio Authority ruling against Capital Radio over remarks made about homosexual people on its *Breakfast Show*. A spokesman for Capital, and consequently *The Times* report, wrongly attributed these remarks to Chris Tarrant. The presenter was in fact Russ Williams. We apologise to Mr Tarrant.

THE EUROPEAN TIMES

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Better hours will ease marital strain

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PLANS aimed at reducing the strain on MPs' marriages by introducing more conventional working hours in the Commons are nearing completion.

The special Commons committee investigating working practices is to recommend a 10pm end to parliamentary business, except in emergencies. The move, part of an initiative announced by John Major when he became prime minister, will remove the pressure on family life caused by late and all-night sittings.

In practice, votes at 10pm would still delay MPs for another half-hour, but the reform would enable them to return home before midnight instead of having to remain at Westminster in case of votes in the early hours.

In the light of complaints from MPs about the difficulty of finding in constituency work and finding time to spend with families, the committee wants also to cut the number of Friday sittings. That would take the normal parliamentary week from 2.30pm Monday to 10pm Thursday. To make up the hours, the committee will suggest a Wednesday morning sitting, probably starting at 10.30, to deal with private business.

One of the committee's main concerns is the anecdotal evidence that the late hours deter both men and women

with young families from standing for Parliament.

The MPs are understood to have ruled out sittings from 9am to 5pm because of the importance of free mornings for ministerial, constituency and other business duties. Also, four or five morning sittings a week would do little to help MPs with small children. The committee has not yet agreed how tightly to control the scope for longer sittings in emergencies.

The prospect of a small majority, or a minority, government after the election has increased the desire for reform as heavy legislation would raise the pressure for longer sittings. Although the committee is not expected to publish its report until early March, some of its MPs are anxious to win approval from the Commons for the reforms before the new parliament.

The changes are mostly in line with the recommendations from John MacGregor, Leader of the House, and the ideas from the other parties. However, most of those on the cross-party committee disagree with Mr MacGregor's call for the abolition of ten-minute rule bills introduced by backbench MPs. The bills stand little chance of becoming law, but the committee sees them as a vehicle for worthwhile proposals that could be taken on by a government.

Press told to show restraint

BY MELINDA WITTSOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

NEWSPAPERS must avoid mixing political reporting with irrelevant commentaries on the private lives of politicians, Lord McGregor of Durris, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, said yesterday in the wake of the Paddy Ashdown affair.

Although the commission has received no complaints about the coverage, Lord McGregor said that he feared reports on politician's sex lives during the emotive pre-election campaign would increase the threat of statutory press regulation.

The press, on probation for 18 months in the wake of the 1989 Calcutt report into privacy and the press, had improved considerably over the past 12 months, Lord McGregor said. But if sections of the press became "providers of little Kinsey reports on politicians and parliamentary candidates, then all the gains of the past 12 months will be lost."

He in no way thought that the *News of the World*, which received the stolen document about Mr Ashdown's affair, or *The Scotsman*, which broke the story, had acted wrongly, but restraint must be the "maximum of the day" if stringent privacy laws and government intervention were to be avoided.

Marriages suffer, Major says

BY NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE prime minister yesterday echoed Paddy Ashdown's comments on the strains imposed on marriages by the Westminster lifestyle.

John Major said that politics was a "rough trade for marriages and always had been". Mr Major's remarks came in an interview with BBC Radio 1 broadcast last night but recorded before the Mr Ashdown's admission that he had a brief affair with his then Commons secretary five years ago.

They were in the same vein as comments made by Mr Ashdown in an interview with *Living* magazine in

which he described the Commons as a "madhouse" designed to deny MPs any social life and "smash up their marriages".

While the prime minister denied that his own marriage had been put under strain by his career, he acknowledged that his wife Norma had had some tearful moments. The pressure on her had intensified on his promotion from Treasury chief secretary to foreign secretary in 1989, a post that he held for three months before being made Chancellor.

Mr Major said that his Treasury job was "one of the

busiest jobs in the cabinet" and the one with the greatest workload. "I moved straight from that to become foreign secretary, with a lot of travelling. It was a time when a lot was happening at home with the children, and a whole series of other personal matters. It was a tough two or three months."

Mr Major said that he had been "extraordinarily lucky" that his wife had understood what his work entailed and that she had contributed remarkably. His two teenage children had also been "amazing" in their tolerance, he said.

Tape of negotiations with Maxwell played at Keays libel case

BY A STAFF REPORTER

ROBERT Maxwell added a dash of merriment to the Sara Keays libel case yesterday when the recorded voice of the late publishing magnate was heard saying that he could be trusted as if he were the Bank of England.

The recording played to the High Court jury was of Maxwell negotiating with Miss Keays, sometime lover of Cecil Parkinson, the former Tory party chairman, over serialisation of her book *A Question of Judgement*.

Court 13, scene of libel cases involving Maxwell, echoed to laughter as he told her: "Trust me if you will... You know, my record speaks for itself... Can I say to you that you're talking to Robert Max-

well. I'm not Rupert Murdoch. I'm not a hired hand. You are as safe with me as you would be in the Bank of England."

As they struck their deal in October 1985, the week before the Tory party conference, Maxwell told her: "You're quite a tough lady."

The recording made by Miss Keays was produced while she was being cross-examined on the fourth day of her action against *New Woman* magazine. She is suing over an article published in October 1989 that she claims accused her of being a kiss-and-tell bimbo who wrote her book to make money and to cause maximum embarrassment to Mr Parkinson.

On the tape, the court heard Miss Keays bargain for £110,000 for the serialisation rights. It was agreed that, if serialisation did not go ahead in time for the conference, she would receive £110,000 plus £50,000 compensation and 25,000 hardback copies of the book, worth £40,000.

Miss Keays, aged 44, told the court that she was worried about industrial action and that there had to be a very strong "disincentive" against the book not seeing the light of day.

On the tape, Maxwell told her that he did not look on serialisation of her book as business, but as "a matter of major social, political and human importance". Miss Keays said that "some very big vested interests" were anxious to stop the serialisation, and Maxwell reassured her that they could not stop him, saying: "I'm not part of the establishment."

Earlier, in cross-examination by Desmond Browne, QC, for *New Woman*, Miss Keays agreed that she had told the *Daily Mirror* that it would have to pay for a photograph of herself to accompany the serialisation. "If I'm going to do anything to benefit these people, I expect to be paid for it. I have no income. My career has been destroyed."

Miss Keays, of Marksbury, near Bath, has said she wrote her book to protect her reputa-

tion because of a "smear campaign" against her, and that she had not been "hell bent on revenge" against Mr Parkinson, Murdoch Magazines (UK) and Frankie McGowan, former editor of *New Woman*, deny libel.

Miss Keays denied that she had capitalised on the notoriety of herself and Flora, her daughter by Mr Parkinson, by selling photographs of the baby to the press. She agreed that she had received £17,000 for pictures of the child at a month old that appeared in the *Sunday Mirror* and the *Observer* in January 1984.

Mr Browne, questioning Miss Keays about whether she had wanted to cause embarrassment, pointed to a reference in her book about the night in April 1982 when it was reported that Britain was about to send a small task force to the South Atlantic.

She wrote: "Cecil had stayed with me at Temple West that night and had been about to drive to Cambridge the following morning when we heard the news of an emergency meeting of the Cabinet concerning the Falkland Islands. He left in a state of some anxiety lest anyone from 10 Downing Street had been trying to get in touch with him."

Miss Keays told the court that that was included to show that it was a lie to say that at the time Mr Parkinson making a "serious criticism" of Margaret Thatcher, the then prime minister, relating to the time of the Falklands crisis, if she had not wanted to cause embarrassment.

Miss Keays denied that it was to get her own back on No 10, which she claimed had "fueled the campaign" against her. If she wanted to embarrass the party, she could reveal matters, "certainly things about the Falklands war" that had not previously been made public, she said.

The hearing continues today.



Protest arrests: Peter Tatchell, a former Labour parliamentary candidate, being arrested in London yesterday during a march on Parliament to demand reform of laws on homosexuality. Several people were arrested for breaching a law banning marches within a mile of Parliament while MPs are sitting.

Rise in students to cost £150m

BY JOHN O'LEARY, HIGHER EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE reluctance of students to join the government's loan scheme has saved education ministers from an overspend on student grants and fees of almost £100 million.

Universities, polytechnics and colleges took 54,000 more full-time students last autumn, committing the government to an unexpected increase in spending on grants and fees. But the education department's annual report, published yesterday, showed that the low take-up of student loans more than compensated with a saving of £103 million.

With the number of applications for loans almost doubling this year, the saving will not be repeated, and the continuing growth in student numbers is expected to require an extra £150 million for grants and fees. By 1994, the bill may rise to £500 million. Higher education is

expanding at such a rate that the education department expects institutions to have cut their costs by more than 14 per cent in three years. Another 100,000 full-time students are expected by 1994-95. The education department expects polytechnics and colleges, which took

35,000 more full-time students in the current academic year, to have cut their costs per student by more than 20 per cent over a six-year period. Last year they took 26,000 more students with no more staff.

Universities will have made savings of 14 per cent in three years. In 1989-90, the last year for which figures have been finalised, they had the same number of students per member of staff as the polytechnics.

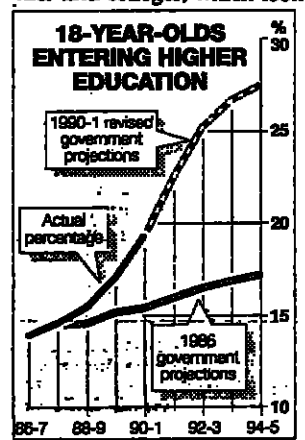
A spokeswoman for the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals said: "We have been saying for some time that we have got problems. This is why we are concerned about how universities are going to preserve the quality of their courses."

The report showed an expected rise of 10 per cent in next year's budget for higher education, as part of an £800

million increase in the department's total spending. One 18 year-old in four will be taking a higher education course, compared with one in seven in 1986-87.

A £10 million rise in the cost of the Assisted Places Scheme, enabling children from low-income families to attend independent schools, was attacked by Jack Straw, Labour's education spokesman. The increase, disclosed in the department's report, came at a time when 6,000 places remained unfilled.

Both Labour and the Liberal Democrats are committed to abolishing the scheme. Mr Straw said: "While state schools are facing very serious cuts in budgets, the government is writing blank cheques for private schools. The assisted places scheme is a failure — both remarkably unpopular and wasteful."



Thousand cancer patients given wrong radiation dose

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

ABOUT a thousand cancer patients given radiotherapy treatment over the past ten years at North Staffordshire Hospital Centre received smaller doses of radiation than they should have because an x-ray system was wrongly programmed.

Cancer specialists said yesterday that the error was "extremely serious" and that the treated patients were at risk of their tumours re-growing. Some patients received doses of radiation up to 30 per cent lower than prescribed.

Yesterday, North Staffordshire Health Authority announced it was setting up an independent clinical review to discover why the error went undetected for a decade. The mistake was discovered before Christmas by the medical physicist who made the original error in 1982, but it was not made public until yesterday to allow doctors to check through the patients' hospital notes.

On Tuesday John Scoble and Murray Brunt, consultant clinical oncologists,

wrote to 447 patients who are still alive offering them an appointment. Patients' GPs have also been informed.

Only patients treated by the isocentric technique, in which the x-ray machine is rotated around the body, were affected. They amount to 6 per cent of the 17,000 patients treated over the decade. They include patients with lung, throat, bladder, pelvic and cervical cancers. Children and women with breast cancer were not affected.

The problem arose when a "correction factor", which adjusts the dose according to the distance of the radiation source from the skin, was unnecessarily programmed into the system's computer. The medical physicist responsible, who had 30 years of experience, did not realise that the correction factor was already built in, so a double correction was made.

This is the first known case of cancer patients being under-treated with radiation. In 1988, 207 patients at Exeter Hospital received excess

doses after an x-ray system was wrongly calibrated. More than £1 million compensation has been paid.

In their letter to the Stafford patients, Dr Scoble and Dr Brunt say that in spite of the reduced doses their treatment was given "satisfactorily and without any obvious clinically detectable difference in outcome from that which should be expected". Dr Brunt said yesterday: "As far as we are aware, no one has actually suffered."

Other specialists disputed that assessment. Professor Karol Sikora, clinical oncologist at Hammersmith Hospital, London, said: "If up to a third too little radiation is given the patient may not be cured and could die from the disease regrowing."

Jeffrey Tobias, consultant clinical oncologist and radiotherapist at University College Hospital, London, said: "A 30 per cent reduction in dose is extremely serious. There is risk of local recurrence and the need for salvage surgery."

Tributes flood in to 40 years of dedication

BY ALAN HAMILTON

SHOWERED with congratulations from home and abroad, the Queen began the 40th anniversary of her accession to the throne yesterday with a moment's reflection at Sandringham, for the day also marks the death of her father, King George VI, in that same house on February 6, 1952, at the age of only 56.

Accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, the Queen drove the short distance to St Mary Magdalene church for a private communion service.

Later, the Queen and her staff tackled eight sacks of mail delivered from King's Lynn sorting office, containing many messages of goodwill. Messages also arrived from heads of state including President von Weizsacker of Germany, who said that the United Kingdom and the royal family had always advocated the restoration of German unity "with understanding and sympathy".

Her own government and Opposition added their tributes in the Commons. John Major sent the Cabinet's "warmest good wishes", while Neil Kinnock remarked that his sovereign was respected throughout the world for her "wisdom, strength and dedication".

The Queen's only public engagement of the day was a visit to a hospice for cancer patients in Snettisham, where a crowd of more than 500 greeted her with applause. In a violet coat and hat, she smiled broadly as she collected armfuls of flowers.

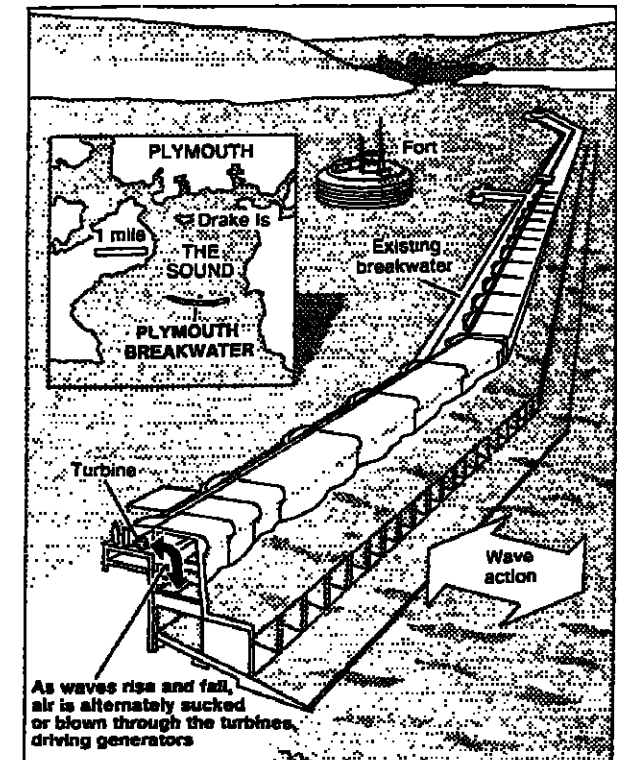
As on every Accession Day, gun salutes were fired in Hyde Park and at the Tower of London. During the Hyde Park salute by the King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery, a horse became trapped under a gun carriage and was dragged for 50 yards. It was found to have suffered no more than a grazed front leg.

The highlight of yesterday, for the Queen, for her dinner guests at Sandringham, and for millions of her subjects, was 110 minutes in front of the television watching the documentary *Elizabeth R*, a film portrait of one of the nation's great undiscovered comedienness, buoyant, sharp and in very good form.

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Plymouth harnesses wave power

BY NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT



ENGINEERS are planning to adapt a decaying breakwater built during the Napoleonic wars to generate electricity from Atlantic waves running through Plymouth Sound.

The scheme in co-operation with Coventry Polytechnic could become the largest of its kind in the world, providing up to 15 per cent of Plymouth with cheap and environment-friendly electricity. The project plans to harness variations of wave technology pioneered on the island of Islay by Queen's University, Belfast, and also developed by the National Engineering Laboratories at East Kilbride.

Such systems, known as oscillating water columns, use waves hitting the breakwater to alternately force and suck air through a tur-

bine as the water level rises and falls between waves. In the Plymouth scheme 30 of the wave units will be built on the front of the half-mile breakwater which lies a mile and a half from the city.

A consortium of companies including Hoare Lea, a local firm of consulting environmental engineers, is working with the polytechnic which has a strong reputation in wave energy engineering. The consortium has applied to the energy department for £100,000 towards a nine-month £200,000 study.

The consortium plans to funnel the electricity into a nearby power station. Alan Knight, of Hoare Lea, said: "For once wave power can be generated on the steps of a large city instead of at remote sites."

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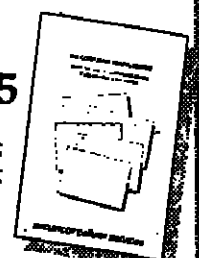
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Depressed Belfast awaits new killings

Edward Gorman reports a mood of fear and apprehension on both sides as recent violence revives the terrors of the 1970s

YOU heard them wherever you went in Belfast yesterday: on everybody's lips, words of apprehension and fear in a tense city, anticipating yet more violence.

In the Catholic Falls and the Protestant Shankill roads, there was a simple depressing resignation about what is to come. More innocent people would die. There would be no resolution and nothing would be done by Britain.

At a taxi office on the Falls Road, a few blocks from the Sinn Féin advice centre where a policeman killed three people on Monday, a young man spoke shamelessly about his desire for civil war. The killing seemed to mean nothing to him. Without a trace of irony, he described it as "a way of life". Who cared who got killed, he said. "There has to be something dramatic to end it. I mean, about 3,000 killed in two weeks so that someone will stick their head up and do something."

Just up the road, the frustration came over in a different way from a softly spoken middle-aged woman serving in a small restaurant. She gestured at the road outside where soldiers from Glasgow or Birmingham risk their lives every day.

All we see out there, she said, are funerals. Yesterday it was the doorman of the Sinn Féin centre. The day before it was a Catholic taxi driver and today it was expected to be another of the policeman's victims.

"For the past couple of years things haven't been too bad," she said. "People have been thinking it's almost normal again. But since Christ-

mas, with the bombings and murders, it's been just like the Seventies again. There's a lot of fear around. I mean, they could come in here and do it on us and we'd be completely defenceless."

She wanted to know when a British prime minister would have the courage to give Ireland back to the Irish people. "They haven't done what the people want, which is to give us our country. Who is going to be the man who will do it? Does he exist?"

From the Falls, driving across the so-called Peace Line—a wasteland of graffiti-scratched walls screaming communal hatred—to the Protestant Shankill on the other side takes just three minutes.

Many of the frustrations on the Shankill were the same. People are fed up with the intransigence of their politicians—there was hardly a good word to be heard for Ian Paisley—and desperately want the killing brought to an end.

A woman in her fifties serving in the Protestant equivalent of the little restaurant on the Falls said that Britain should pull the army out and let the gunmen slug it out. "They should put them in a field and let them blow each other to pieces," she said.

She and her friends feared that republicans would exact revenge for the beating shop murders of five Catholics on Wednesday. "You just know that, sooner or later, they are going to hit this road and it will be innocent people again," she said. "There has to be a stop to it."

Major calls meeting, page 1

Lawyers to test poll tax loophole

BY DOUGLAS BROOM
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CORRESPONDENT

THE first attempt to free a poll tax protester from prison using a loophole in the law on the use of computer evidence in court will be made next week.

Lawyers acting for Michael O'Connell, a man jailed last month by magistrates at Ealing, west London, for two months for refusing to pay the tax, will argue that computer records should not have been accepted as evidence that he had not paid. The application to the High Court for bail pending a judicial review of his case will take place less than six weeks before the government is due to close the loophole.

Figures published yesterday by the Labour-controlled Association of Metropolitan Authorities show that one in four people in London and other big cities has been summonsed for non-payment. Arguments over the admissibility of computer evidence have halted more than 20,000 poll tax cases in England. The government has said it will close the loophole by an amendment to the bill to introduce the council tax.

Nutrition centre sifts food facts

BY KERRY GILL

THE definitive guide to healthy eating, synthesised from the welter of advice and contradictory evidence that daily bombards the public, could soon be produced by the first nutrition centre of its kind in Europe.

Scotland's 15 health boards have funded the post-graduate nutrition and dietetic centre at Aberdeen's Rowett research institute, aimed at helping health professionals to sift through the confusion of dietary opinion and make sure that the public gets the correct information. Alison Robertson, director of the centre, said that people had become confused about what they should eat because of often contradictory advice. She said the amount of government literature and recommendations faced by people in the health service added to the problem.

A course at the centre will cover topics including coronary heart disease, obesity, diabetes, nutrition and healthy eating. A training road-show, piloted in Grampian region, is to be extended throughout the UK and Europe and possibly to America.

Law firms report rise in would-be recruits

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

STUDENTS aspiring to follow in the footsteps of leading barristers flocked to the stand hosted by the Bar at the opening yesterday of the two-day Law Fair in London. The Bar was one of the main attractions at the recruitment event, attended by some 50 law firms and other legal employers such as the Crown Prosecution Service and magistrates courts service.

The recession is causing funding problems for students. Lee Winetroube, of the Bar Council, said: "We are very, very busy—much more so than before. Students seem very keen to come to the Bar but they are worried about funding during their course. The dearth of the local authority discretionary grant is having an impact."

Clyde and Co, the City law firm, reported being

much busier than last year and said students were anxious about securing a job. Lisa Wilson said: "They seem very worried about securing a vacation place, such is the competition."

The fair, organised by London University careers advisory service and sponsored by The Times, the Law Society, the Bar and the Institute of Legal Executives, is open today from 10am to 4pm at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, Islington, north London.

Today's seminars include women in the law, becoming a barrister, a career as a legal executive, legal alternatives and a talk on law and the press by Carol Leonard, a Times feature writer and editor of its City diary.

Law Report, L&T section, page 9

Reynolds waltzes in as the Boss bows out

BY JAMIE DETTMER

THE era of the Boss in Irish politics passed away yesterday as Charles Haughey, one of the most tenacious and controversial politicians in the Irish republic's history, resigned and was replaced as leader of the main governing Fianna Fáil party by Albert Reynolds.

Mr Reynolds, sacked as finance minister nearly three months ago after spearheading an attempt to oust Mr Haughey, gained the support of 61 deputies in the ballot. He needed 39 to win.

Mary O'Rourke, the health minister, received ten votes, and six deputies supported Michael Woods, the agriculture minister. Mr Reynolds will become the Republic's ninth prime minister, after being formally nominated in Dáil (parliament) as the country's new leader next week.

In a ballot of Fianna Fáil's 77 deputies yesterday Mr Reynolds, a dance hall manager turned pet food millionaire and one of Mr Haughey's closest colleagues until he turned critic last autumn, easily won the three-horse race.

The ballot was held hours after Mr Haughey, known in

Ireland as the Boss, formally resigned as party leader. Mr Haughey announced his intention to step down last week after allegations resurfaced about his involvement in a ten-year-old telephone tapping scandal.

Mr Reynolds will be in limbo until Mr Haughey hands in his resignation as prime minister to President Robinson on Monday night. Mr Reynolds's victory had been a foregone conclusion since last Sunday when Bertie Ahern, his closest rival for the job, announced he would not run.

Yesterday, Dubliners made jokes, if nervous, predictions that Mr Haughey would at the last minute change his mind about quitting and put himself forward as a candidate. In 12 years as Fianna Fáil leader he survived five serious attempts to oust him.

For many in Fianna Fáil, Mr Haughey's departure is a numbing experience. He has towered over Irish politics since winning the party leadership in 1979.

Mr Haughey's successor is not as forceful or colourful a character. Since his sacking last November, Mr Reynolds



Bumpy road ahead: Albert Reynolds waves to supporters after his victory

has been on the so-called "chicken and chips circuit", glad-handing his way through local parties in an effort to drum up support among the Fianna Fáil faithful. His efforts to draw Mr Haughey's leadership to an end were initially dismissed by the Boss's supporters as

mere country and western singing, a disparaging reference to Mr Reynolds's past running of dance halls.

First elected to the Dáil in 1977, Mr Reynolds has had a vast amount of experience in government. As well as serving as finance minister he has held the portfolios of

industry, post and telegraphs and transport.

He is likely to sack up to six of the current cabinet, possibly including Gerry Collins, the current foreign minister.

He clearly wants to clean up Fianna Fáil and distance the party from the accusations of political malpractice

and commercial corruption which have dogged it under Mr Haughey.

Speaking at a press conference after his election, Mr Reynolds said: "I am deeply sad that the day the votes were cast, which should be one of exhilaration and hope, is, instead, a day when I, as an Irishman, must feel diminished by the killings in the north of Ireland. So often have we condemned these murderous acts that we have impoverished the vocabulary of outrage. But we must prove that we have not bankrupted our determination to find a solution to this problem."

Asked whether he would support the reintroduction of internment in Northern Ireland, he said: "We are all aware that this instrument of policy was tried way back in the 1970s. The British government would have to take into account its failings then."

He said that he looked forward to working with John Major to try to end the conflict in Ulster. The cruelty of the continuing conflict in the north came from "a dwarfed and twisted patriotism which sees inflicted death as instruments of change".

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Home rescue schemes offer scant hope

THE mortgage rescue schemes unveiled by the government just before Christmas may make only a small dent in the 80,000 borrowers facing repossession, a study organised by *The Times* has shown.

Initial estimates that 20,000 borrowers could benefit are unlikely to be met. The figure could be as low as 5,000 by the end of the year unless building societies are prepared to loan money at interest rates lower than 6 per cent.

Research devised by *The Times* in conjunction with Nick Raynsford from the housing consultant Raynsford & Morris, and compiled with the help of the Yorkshire Metropolitan Housing Association, a pioneer of mortgage rescue schemes, shows that only a quarter of the homeowners at which the scheme is aimed would be able to afford the high rents required.

Under the scheme, building societies will offer reduced-rate loans to housing associations to buy properties from borrowers in arrears. It is designed for people who have tried to meet payments in spite of having faced hardship through loss of income. The Yorkshire association analysed 40 couples in difficult

The much-hyped mortgage rescue schemes are unlikely to stop many people losing their homes, reports Rachel Kelly

ties in different parts of the country and found only ten who would qualify for rescue.

The research examined couples for who mortgage rescue was the only chance of staying in their homes. It was based on building societies agreeing loans to housing associations at interest rates of both six and eight per cent. The current base mortgage rate is 10.95 per cent.

Of the 40 case histories examined, only 14 still had equity in their house. They were the most eligible for rescue because they could sell to a housing association and become shared owners.

The Yorkshire association found that even four of those 14 would be unlikely to receive an offer of help because they would still find the rents required (£82.90 to £139.30 a week) unaffordable.

"They would face paying such a substantial proportion of their income that the

scheme would not be feasible," David Radcliffe, development director, said.

For the 26 couples with no equity "it's bad news", Mr Radcliffe added. Even a couple living in the cheapest housing area looked at in the research, the east Midlands, would find the rents required barely affordable.

"None of the couples without equity could be helped without some form of extra subsidy," he said. "Some would face paying 44 per cent of their income in rent."

Most couples qualifying for rescue will face such high rents that they will not qualify for housing benefits, because a lot of the rents will be above the limits set by local authorities. The only building society to have produced details of its mortgage-to-rent rescue scheme is the Nationwide which surprised the industry by disclosing that some of its loans to housing associations would have interest rates ranging from 3.5 per cent to 8 per cent. The Nationwide scheme hopes to save 100 families from repossession.

Mr Raynsford said: "Despite all the hype prior to Christmas, only one scheme and a pilot one involving one hundred homes, is all that has emerged. It's extraordinary

MORTGAGE RESCUE

Examples show how rescue is difficult for borrowers with little or no equity in their homes. The couple in the North-West benefits because their mortgage is only 60 per cent of house value.

	BAD NEWS	GOOD NEWS
Income per yr	£11,722	13,244
House value	£53,000	76,000
Mortgage plus arrears	100%	80
Repayments	£115 a wk	155
Interest on loan	6%	6%
Rent after rescue	90.29 a wk	82.00
Status of home owner	Tenant	Shared owner
Outcome	Rent would be 40% of income, no maintenance costs and still unaffordable	Rent would be 33% of income plus maintenance cost, and so unaffordable
Location	Yorkshire & Humber	South-East

nary that no one else has come out with a scheme. The Nationwide scheme works by deciding on affordable rents and then setting very low interest rates to match. That's how they've squared the circle. I'm not sure they could justify the scheme with those interest rates for any significant number of cases."

There are grave doubts whether all other societies involved in rescue plans will feel able to offer rates as low as 3.5 per cent. Don Wood, chief executive of the London and Quadrant Housing Trust, one of the three associations to have negotiated a deal with Nationwide, said: "Your research shows that with interest rates of 6 and 8

per cent many rents would become unaffordable. The figures from *The Times* justify the stand we were taking on affordability in our negotiations with building societies. We calculated that we needed lower rates of interest," Mr Wood said.

Asked whether other building societies would be able to match the low interest rates offered by the Nationwide, Mr Wood said: "I simply couldn't tell you. But I am more hopeful now than I was. I hope the Nationwide deal will be a benchmark."

The association said: "The Nationwide's deal was very generous but other societies may not be so generous."

David Gilchrist, general manager of the country's largest building society, the Halifax, said: "Six to 8 per cent looks like being the top end of the range of negotiations. Housing associations are pressing for something lower than that."

The Woolwich building society has yet to announce the rates it will be charging housing associations, but a spokesman said they would be about 7 per cent.

Of the 80,000 borrowers facing repossession, 60,000 do not qualify to be considered for rescue schemes.

Leading article, page 15

Self-help initiatives need aid, prince says

By John Young

THE Prince of Wales yesterday called for more support for local community initiatives from central and local government and from the private sector.

In a message to mark the launch of the seventh annual Community Enterprise Scheme organised by *The Times*, the Royal Institute of British Architects and Business in the Community, the prince, who is patron of the scheme, welcomed the increasingly significant role that community-based initiatives were being asked to play in regeneration, but said that there had to be ways of increasing the level of support and training.

The prince's message was read by Lord Scarman, chairman of the scheme, who said



Four are jailed as longest trial ends

Britain's longest trial came to an end after 17 months yesterday with the jailing of four men convicted of fraud and deception.

The trial at Nottingham crown court, followed a two-year police investigation into the collapse in 1985 of the Britannia Theme Park, near Loughborough, Derbyshire, which owed more than £9 million. Peter Kellard, aged 57, of Bournemouth, who launched the project through a development group, was jailed for four years after being convicted of 19 charges.

Kellard's close colleague, Edward Dwyer, aged 54, was jailed for two and a half years. Kenneth Page, former director, and John Wright, former chairman, each received six-month sentences.

There were 375 witnesses and the case cost £3 million. The jury used computers to keep track of the evidence.

Woman priest

The Rev Patricia Pinkerton, who ran a Californian Episcopal church for five years, has become minister in charge of two parishes in the Forest of Dean. She will be assisted by a clergyman.

Crew rescued

Three Weymouth fishermen summoned help with a mobile phone after the radio of their stricken vessel failed. They were winched to safety by a navy helicopter before the boat sank two miles off Abbotsbury, Dorset.

Crash award

Colin Middleton, a draughtsman aged 39 who lost his right arm after his motor cycle was in a crash with a car, was awarded £149,998 damages against the driver at the Court of Session, Edinburgh.

Forged coins

Police seized moulds, ingots and 3,000 forged £1 coins in a raid on Castle Mouldings, a factory in Medway, Kent. Two men have been arrested.

Brick by brick

A Victorian chapel threatened with demolition is to be dismantled and moved 60 miles from Salisbury, Wiltshire to Pangbourne College boys' school, Berkshire.



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Mills brings zeal to battered role

By Frances Gibb
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

BARBARA Mills, QC, the first woman Director of Public Prosecutions, takes her post at critical time for the criminal justice system. She will have an important role in restoring public confidence, battered by miscarriages of justice.

Mrs Mills is likely to do the job with zeal. In just under 18 months as director of the Serious Fraud Office, she has gone about her work with crusading enthusiasm and efficiency, doing much to put the office on the map.

Mrs Mills, aged 51 and a mother of four, has had a higher profile than her predecessor at the fraud office, John Wood. In raising the credit stakes of the office, she has drawn criticism of its methods, and of what some see as over-zealous prosecuting.

Many City lawyers have not forgiven her the prosecution of Alan Keat, of the City firm Travers Smith Braithwaite, in the County NatWest trial. The judge threw the case out. They recall Mrs Mills's comment at a Law Society conference that a professional would not find himself in the dock unless there were a prima facie case against him.

Verdicts are expected soon in the Barlow Clowes and County NatWest cases, investigations crucial to any assessment of the office, set up three years ago. There

WOMAN IN THE NEWS

have been criticisms of the length of the Barlow Clowes trial and the number of charges on the original indictment. Mrs Mills has exercised more control over the format of prosecutions, but some lawyers say she has not gone far enough.

The fraud office has also been criticised for use of its power to compel people to answer questions under the Criminal Justice Act 1987.

Mrs Mills's motivation has not been prosecution for its own sake. It has been concern for victims who have lost money, which she cites as justification for what have been called the fraud office's "draconian" investigative powers. After taking over the fraud office, Mrs Mills found herself heading high-profile cases such as Guinness. The fraud office has also been investigating the Maxwell affair.

Educated at St Helen's School, Northwood, London, and Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, where she read law, Mrs Mills made her Bar career largely as a prosecutor. She was seen as "good and solid", rather than brilliant. She was junior Treasury counsel at the Central Criminal Court from 1981 to 1986. She was also second prosecuting counsel in the Guinness trial, and defended Winston Silcott.

Mrs Mills has to restore confidence in the Crown Prosecution Service after the resignation of Sir Allan Green, QC, after kerf-crawling allegations. Service lawyers will be delighted, not least because Mrs Mills will continue their fight for rights of audience in the crown court.

Mrs Mills has said that she believes more use can be made of pre-trial reviews to identify issues and of multi-professional investigations by teams of lawyers, accountants and police.



Mills: concern for the victims of fraud

Mills chosen, Page 1
Leading article, page 15

Doctors call for fuller testing

Africa link detected among Aids mothers

BY THOMSON PRENTICE, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THREE out of four pregnant women found by a London hospital to be infected with the Aids virus were of African origin. The rapid spread of the virus in Asia also makes it likely that a growing number of cases will occur among the Asian community here, according to doctors.

The evidence, reported in *The Lancet* today, gives insights into the heterosexual spread of HIV and suggests that many cases are imported unwittingly into Britain. The researchers call for all pregnant women in areas of London and other cities with high rates of infection to be encouraged to take an HIV blood test on a named basis, rather than anonymously as now, regardless of their ethnic origins.

Junga Banavala, professor of virology at St Thomas's Hospital, southeast London, who led the study, said yesterday: "Such a programme would help in prevention and surveillance of the epidemic.

We are extremely anxious to avoid what used to be seen as a gay plague being regarded as a black plague.

"The Aids virus knows no racial barriers. It is not a question of the colour of your skin, but where you have been, and what you have done there. It would be invidious to target HIV testing at specific ethnic categories. That would fail to identify any spread of infection beyond such groups, and selective screening was known to be inefficient, he said.

The report is a sequel to a finding by the same researchers of a ninefold increase in HIV infection among women attending the hospital's antenatal clinics between 1988 and 1990. A new analysis of their blood samples shows that ten out of 13 HIV-positive women — 77 per cent — were of African origin. Nine of the ten also had malarial antibodies, suggesting that they had recently been in a tropical country. In a group

of women whose ethnic origins were unknown, the five who were HIV-positive also had malarial antibodies.

Professor Banavala said that there should be further studies in inner London to identify risk categories and to see if HIV spreads beyond them, so that prevention could be targeted accurately.

"With the increasing spread of HIV in many parts of Africa and Asia, it is obvious that people moving between them and Britain are at increased risk of becoming infected and importing that infection into the UK.

"We need much more accurately targeted methods of monitoring the spread here. If pregnant women agree to be tested on an identifiable basis, we can offer those who are infected counselling, support, and care for their babies if they decide to continue with the pregnancy."

Diary, page 14
Health, L&T section, page 6



On parade: soldiers of the 1st British Tank Regiment showing off their babies at Fallingb., Germany. Homecoming celebrations after the Gulf war resulted in a baby boom with 137 births among wives of troops based in Germany

Transplant drug controls asthma

A DRUG used to prevent organ rejection in transplant patients has been found to transform the lives of chronic asthma sufferers (Thomson Prentice writes).

The drug, cyclosporin, is a standard treatment after heart and other transplants because it suppresses part of the immune system. Doctors report in *The Lancet* today that the drug also produces a marked improvement among chronic, severe asthmatics, including some who have endured asthma attacks for more than 25 years.

The finding could open the way to the development of a new range of drugs which, like cyclosporin, suppress the activity of T-cells that are important in the body's natural defences. These cells have been found to be activated in chronic asthma.

The research suggests that new drugs could benefit many of the 200,000 asthmatics who depend on high doses of steroids to control their condition. Cyclosporin improved lung function and reduced the number of severe attacks in a group of patients at the Royal Brompton Nat-

ional Heart and Lung Hospitals in London.

Andrew Alexander, a clinical research fellow, and colleagues at the hospital say in the journal that improvements occurred throughout the 12-week study period and might have continued if the treatment had been extended. One patient, a woman aged 47, could now run for a bus and go dancing, which she has been unable to do for many years.

Barry Kay, head of the hospital's allergy and clinical immunology department, and one of the co-authors of the study, said yesterday: "High doses of steroids have serious side effects, such as diabetes, and do not always control adequately severe, intractable forms of asthma."

He said that cyclosporin could also cause dangerous side effects, such as liver damage. The long-term safety and efficacy for asthmatics still had to be determined. "The real importance of our discovery is that it opens the way for a new class of anti-asthma drugs that are more selective and less toxic in suppressing the activity of T-cells."

Jail boasts the best porridge

BY KERRY GILL

ASK an old lag to name the man over whom he would most like to tip a bowl of porridge and the answer is the prison cook.

However, Bill White, head of catering at Friarton prison, near Perth, is unlikely to be smothered in "haleome porridge". Although he has only £6.20 a week to spend on each prisoner, yesterday inmates and prison inspectors declared his fare the best in Scotland's penal service. It is even served on china instead of tin trays.

A report by the Scottish prisons inspectorate says that Friarton "is the one where the inmates have displayed the most appreciation of the regime ... Indeed, more than one prisoner opined that the prison was almost too good for them."

Alan Bishop, the chief prisons inspector, said: "We were told of the very high standard of catering, many prisoners suggesting that it was the best food in the whole service. Our own observations did not lead us to regard the comments as exaggerated."

Jim Harker, governor of the jail, said: "Because we are a small prison, the food can be freshly cooked."

Porridge need not be the breakfast staple of Friarton's 70 inmates. Yesterday, they could begin with boiled egg, toast, bread and tea. Special diets and preferences are catered for, and inmates going out in working parties may tell Mr White their favourite fillings for sandwiches.

Tomorrow 15 tons of porridge oats will be flown to St. Peterburg by the Salvation Army and Fife Rotary clubs to help to feed its people.



Roddick: ordered to remove factory sign

Body shop chief loses sign fight

Anita Roddick, managing director of the Body Shop store chain, has been ordered to remove a billboard put up without planning permission outside the firm's factory in Littlehampton, West Sussex.

The board displays messages reflecting Mrs Roddick's philosophy. Residents say it is an eyesore that distracts drivers. Her appeal to the environment department against Arun district council's planning refusal has failed. The council said: "Unless she takes it down soon she will face prosecution."

M-way closed

A nine-mile stretch of the M50 was closed after cracks were found in a bridge support on the Severn near Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire. Police said that rush hour traffic jams in the area were expected for at least a week.

Rape hoaxer

Wilma Wetherow, aged 22, of no fixed address, was jailed for three months by Bow Street magistrates' court, London, for hoax phone calls in which she told police she was being raped.

Body found

Police divers recovered a body thought to be that of Kenneth Hales, aged 45, missing after the capsizing of a lifeboat in which another man died at Hull on Wednesday.

High in polyunsaturates. Low in saturates. Virtually no cholesterol. (Just in case you thought it was butter.)

Let's make one thing clear. "I Can't Believe It's Not Butter!" is not butter.

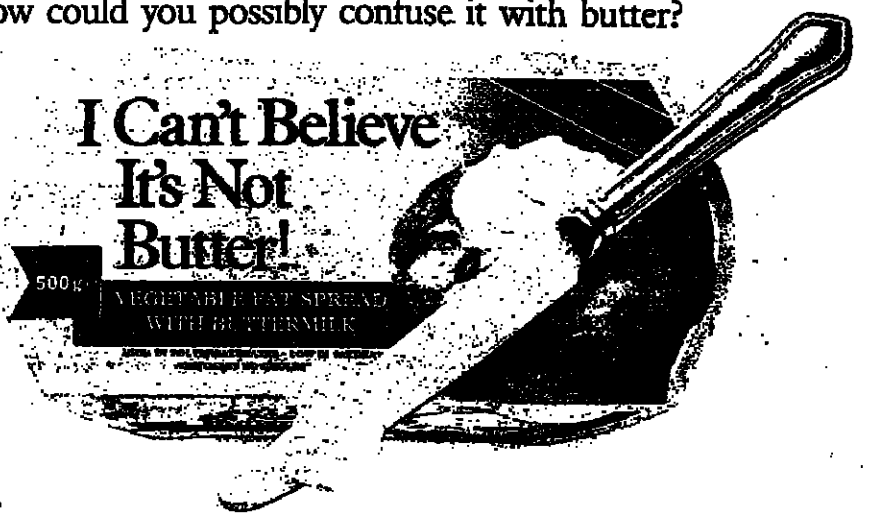
At the risk of repeating ourselves, it's a vegetable fat spread high in polyunsaturates, low in saturates and containing virtually no cholesterol. Hand on heart, how could you possibly confuse it with butter?

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Labour condemns 'deceit' over slump

BY PETER MULLIGAN AND JOHN WINDER

LABOUR last night accused parts of the press of deceit and hypocrisy for proclaiming the Tory message of economic recovery to their readers while reserving the real story for shareholders and directors.

Gordon Brown, the shadow trade and industry spokesman, said ministers were relying on a huge public relations offensive from some tabloids and from party advertising campaigns to conceal their economic record.

During a Labour-inspired debate on the recession, he scorned Conservative sightings of an upturn and spoke of the "recovery by phrase-makers" dreamed up over a working breakfast which "even the messengers do not believe".

Mr Brown provoked loud laughter among his backbenchers by quoting the words of *The Sun*: "It looks good. Britain's on the way. We are OK in the UK. If that's depression, let's have more of it."

He then quoted from the report last September to the shareholders of News International, the paper's owners: "Economic conditions as they affect the media are not expected to improve during the next year."

Mr Brown cited Associated Newspapers, owners of the *Daily Mail*: "Such limited signs of recovery in the UK

economy as are visible remain patchy and do not give us any grounds for optimism."

He reported the chief executive of Saatchi and Saatchi, the firm which is handling the election advertising campaign for Conservative Central Office, as saying: "I do not expect trading to be any easier this year. The length and severity of the current recession are unresolved."

The entire Tory propaganda machine made a sharp distinction between the message it put to voters and the one that went to directors and shareholders, Mr Brown said. "One truth for the public who they are prepared to deceive and another truth for directors and shareholders and the City audience on whom they depend. The public are being treated with contempt."

Mr Brown rejected John Major's assertion that Britain was caught up in a world recession. "There is no world recession. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the prime minister is condemned by his own words as economically illiterate," he said.

He ridiculed ministerial forecasts of recovery, declared they could not be trusted and rejected accusations that he was talking Britain down.

Peter Lilley, the trade and industry secretary, said that

the preconditions of sustained recovery were low inflation, reduced interest rates and renewed confidence, but Labour policy was tailor-made to undermine all three.

Labour policies would send inflation soaring; Labour would be obliged to put up interest rates, and commentators differed only on the extent to which they would have to raise them. All nine important research houses which had analysed the impact of a Labour government, forecast higher interest rates.

Every Labour government had had to face a choice of whether to maintain the present parity of the pound or to devalue. In the past every Labour government had first put up interest rates, then "bottled out" and devalued, Mr Lilley said.

The Labour proposal for tax allowances for investment in new technology and "genuine innovation" meant inland Revenue having to vet every investment in plant and machinery to decide whether each piece of equipment was sufficiently sophisticated. "A more guaranteed way to delay every investment is hard to imagine but that is their policy."

Labour nationalisation plans would have an adverse effect in areas of the economy which were at present buoyant. Their policies would prolong and deepen recession.

Take two aspirin and go to the lobby

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE spectre of ambulances decanting ailing MPs into a hung Parliament has spurred a parliamentary enquiry to consider a system of proxy voting.

As part of their reforms of Commons working practices, MPs on the select committee have been investigating a scheme to record MPs' votes while absent in limited circumstances. They are expected to demand a separate enquiry by the procedure committee into the implications.

The parties' business managers, including John MacGregor, the leader of the House, favour informal "usual channels" to deal with sick MPs.

In recent years the large majority Conservative governments have had little need to drag MPs from their sickbeds. Many MPs are also "paired" for routine votes to exempt them from taking part in every division.

The committee now has one eye on the prospect of a hung Parliament or narrow majority, as happened at times during the 1960s and 1970s. Its report will be published early next month and it will press for a decision by the Commons before the election.

When every vote is regarded as crucial and the pairing system breaks down, the whips can rarely afford to show any sympathy for those in hospital or the recently bereaved, as

the committee chairman Michael Jopling found when an Opposition whip during the Wilson years.

After the breakdown of the pairing system in the late 1970s, many divisions hung on the attendance of all 650 MPs, however ill. Sir Alfred Broughton, the then Labour MP for Bexley and Morley, was one of those brought in by ambulance to support the Callaghan government during its final weeks. The Labour leadership refused to wheel in Sir Alfred on March 30, 1979, as a result it lost the confidence vote by one. Sir Alfred died four days later.

The problem for the Commons committee has been to limit the scheme to genuine cases. Two disputed areas are the absence of MPs through family bereavement and women MPs when heavily pregnant or within days of giving birth.

The former prime minister Edward Heath told the committee how much he disliked press-gauging half-dead MPs into the division lobbies when he was chief whip in the 1950s. However, he opposed a proxy voting system because, he argued, absent MPs would not have listened to the arguments in the chamber. As Mr Heath will be 76 and in his 42nd parliamentary year after the election, MPs on the committee will no doubt have his welfare in mind when considering a scheme.



House doctor: John MacGregor favours "usual channels" to deal with sick MPs

AROUND THE LOBBY

Hunt bill loses support

John Major will not be voting for the private member's bill to ban hunting with dogs when it comes before the Commons next Friday.

Tony Banks, Labour MP for Newham North West, thanked the prime minister for allowing ministers a free vote on a bill that would protect deer, hares and foxes. Mr Major said the bill went a good deal wider than Mr Banks had suggested and that he would not be supporting it.

Beefing up the army

Ministers are looking at ways of providing British beef for the armed forces rather than meat imported from South America. John Gummer, the agriculture minister, said at a question time. David Clark, his shadow, had asked him how the defence ministry could import thousands of tonnes when almost one million tonnes were already in intervention in Europe.

Moscow trip

Sir Geoffrey Howe, the former foreign secretary, is to lead an Inter-Parliamentary Union delegation to Moscow and Kiev next week. The group, which includes Ann Clwyd, the shadow overseas aid minister, hopes to meet political leaders and members of the public.

Roads pledge

The transport department will announce plans later this month to improve maintenance on motorways and to speed up the backlog of essential repairs. Christopher Chope, the roads and traffic minister, said in a written reply.

Land grants

The government's derelict land grant for England is to be increased by £18 million to £106 million in the next financial year. Sir George Young, the planning minister, said in a written reply. The money, most of which goes to local authorities, is sufficient to fund the reclamation of about 3,700 acres.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Private member's bill: Timeshare Bill, second reading.

Week ahead

The main business in the House of Commons next week is expected to be Monday: Offshore Safety Bill, second reading; Tuesday: Further and Higher Education Bill, second reading and timetable motion; Wednesday: Proceedings on Consolidated Fund (No 2) Bill, Museums and Galleries Bill, second reading; Thursday: Army Bill, second reading; Friday: Private member's bill: Wild Mammals (Protection) Bill, second reading. The main business in the Lords is expected to be Monday: Asylum Bill, second reading; Tuesday: Education (Schools) Bill, second reading; Wednesday: Debate on weapons of mass destruction; Thursday: Coal Industry Bill, committee. Debate on human rights in Northern Ireland.

Counties may get new seats

BY ROBERT MORGAN

THE Boundary Commission has recommended the creation of three more parliamentary constituencies in Hampshire and Berkshire. If the recommendations are endorsed by Parliament, the Tories would almost certainly gain three extra MPs from these true blue shires.

No change will be made before the forthcoming election and they might not be in place for the following one.

The commission is required by statute to review boundaries as populations shift. It tries to arrange boundaries so that there are 60,000-70,000 voters in each seat. The Parliamentary Constituencies Act, 1986 lays down that, as far as possible, county and London borough boundaries are to be followed and electorates are to be as near equal as possible.

Berkshire has seven constituencies and its present electorate indicates it should have 7.92 seats. The commission suggests an eighth seat, Bracknell, Hampshire, the commission says, should have two new seats, bringing its total to 17. Unless additional seats are created the average electorate in each of its existing seats would be 79,378. With 17 seats the average will be 70,039. The changes will divide the seat of New Forest into East and West, and a new seat of Meon Valley will be created.

Although the Isle of Wight, on an electorate basis, should have more than one but fewer than two MPs, the commission recommends no change. The commission is reviewing all seats in England and has to submit its plans for the whole country between 1993 and 1998. The last wholesale changes were made between the 1979 and 1983 elections amid controversy over the change of name for many familiar seats.

Olympic protest

BY JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A TORY backbencher has complained to Juan Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee, about money being spent on advertising the European Commission at international sporting events.

Tony Favell, MP for Stockport, wrote to Señor Samaranch yesterday saying £8 million had been committed as a grant for public relations projects at the Olympics. "Could you please let me have your assurance that the European Commission will not be permitted to use the Olympics as a political vehicle?"

The Olympic charter says: "No kind of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in the Olympic areas."

The IOC rejected a request by Jacques Delors, the commission president, that he open the Winter Games to



Favell: questioning EC advertising in sport

morrow, and his suggestion that the 12 EC nations march together, wearing the EC symbol. The committee did accept a reported £10 million fee to allow the commission some involvement - as yet unspecified - in the opening ceremony.

David Miller, page 32

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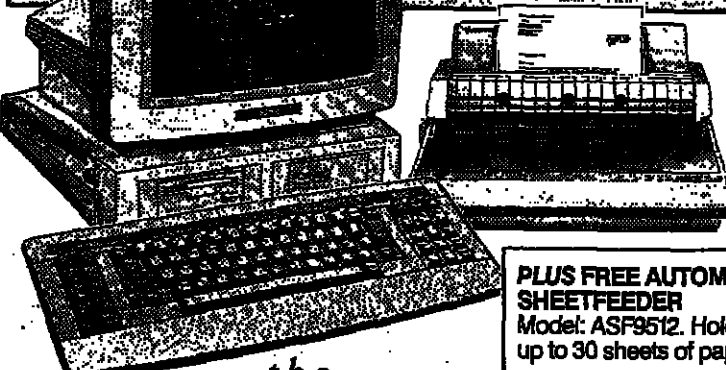
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Security council retains sanctions

Saddam challenges terms of ceasefire

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

PRESIDENT Saddam Hussein of Iraq, apparently gambling that he can outlast John Major and President Bush, has launched a challenge to the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire.

Baghdad has rejected outright a United Nations plan for the long-term monitoring of its arms industry, and has pulled out of talks with the UN on resuming oil sales to pay for humanitarian supplies. The Iraqi position amounts to a clear violation of mandatory UN resolutions, and once again puts the country on a collision course with the security council.

In their bimonthly review of the UN embargo, the council yesterday decided not to relax the comprehensive sanctions against Iraq. It issued a statement saying it was "disturbed by the lack of Iraqi co-operation", particularly in the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, talks on a limited oil sale and the repatriation of Kuwaiti detainees and property.

A senior Western diplomat said: "We are gradually moving towards some difficult



Al-Anbari: will not be pursuing oil sale talks

dealing with Saddam Hussein. It is not a day-to-day, week-to-week issue. It is an issue of keeping the security council committed to compliance with its resolutions."

The head of the UN special commission charged with disarming Iraq is due to report today that Iraq has refused to provide a detailed report on its defence industries, as required by the security council.

Senior Iraqi officials told the UN delegation sent to Baghdad to discuss the dispute that Iraq "would not make any further declarations" on its arms production plans. At the same time, Iraq has "cancelled" a second round of talks with the UN about resuming oil sales.

The security council

authorised Iraq last August to sell \$1.6 billion (£890 million) of oil over a six-month period so that it could buy food and other essential supplies for its population. But the resolution allowing the sale required about one-third of the total to go towards financing the UN compensation fund for Gulf war victims and the UN programme to eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

After months of stalling, Iraq opened talks about a possible oil sale with the United Nations in Vienna last month. However, Abdul Amir al-Anbari, the Iraqi ambassador at the UN, now says that Baghdad considers UN restrictions on the proposed oil sale unacceptable and will not pursue the talks.

Exiled Iraqi Muslim Shias said yesterday that army units had been deployed recently along the main Baghdad highway to Amara, south of the Iraqi capital, after Shia demonstrations.



Novelty line: a woman demonstrating a mobile telephone yesterday claimed by its Japanese maker, NEC Corporation, the computer firm, to be the world's smallest. "It is very convenient — small and light enough to slip into a shirt pocket," an NEC official said. The P4 weighs 7.76oz, is

0.83in thick, 2.2in wide and 6in long. The telephone will make its debut in America this month and will be marketed in more than 30 countries, though not in Japan. Kotaro Kato, an NEC manager, said. It will cost about \$1,800 (£990) and NEC expects to sell 60,000 a month. (Reuters)

Paymaster looks for UN reward

FROM JOANNA PITMAN IN TOKYO

JAPAN is convinced it deserves a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council and, while anxious not to be seen twisting arms, aims for a seat in 1995, the UN's 50th anniversary year.

At last week's security council summit, Kiichi Miyazawa, the Japanese prime minister, dropped hints about Japan's ambitions and proposed discussions on the structure of the UN in the light of the new post-cold war world order.

His hints were tentative and Mr Miyazawa received the usual reminders that the inclusion of Japan in the security council's permanent membership would require an unprecedented change in the UN charter.

However, Japan takes solace in the fact that the validity of the council's structure, which Japan believes obsolete, is at last coming under scrutiny from the rest of the world.

Tokyo is one of the UN's chief paymasters (contributing more than Britain and France combined), yet is blocked from permanent membership and denied "reasonable" executive representation in the UN.

Korean plotters executed

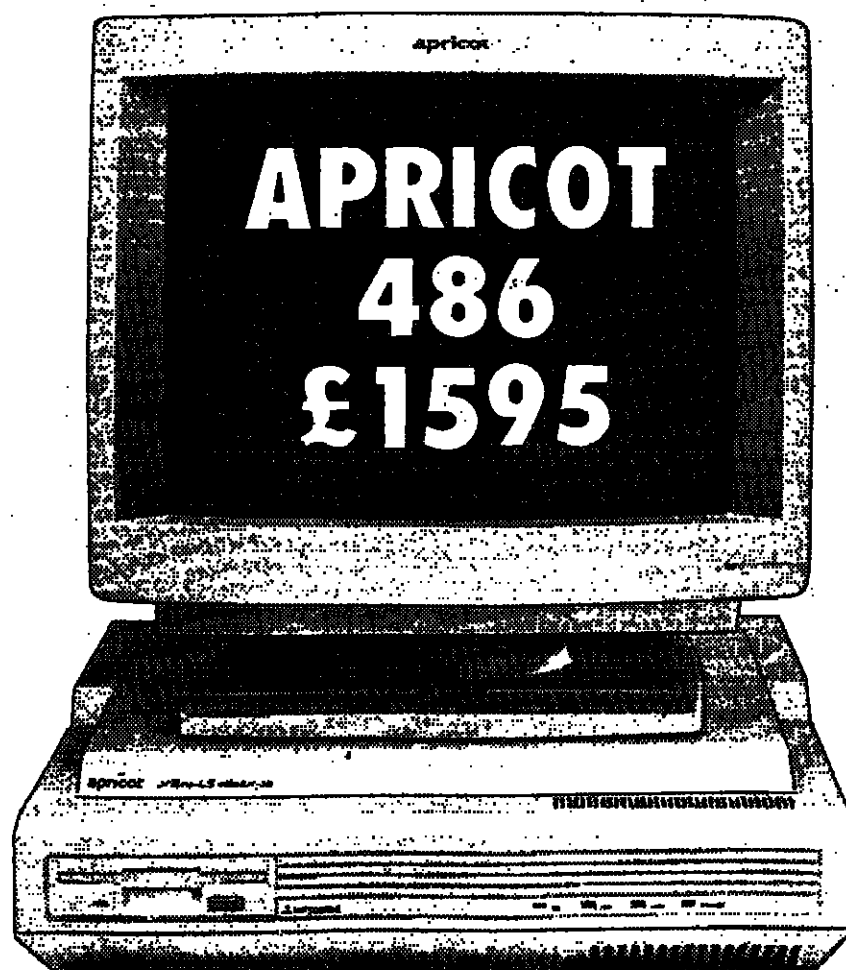
FROM AFP IN SEOUL

NORTH Korea has executed more than ten people for a plot against Kim Jong Il, who took over the country's military command in December from his father, President Kim Il Sung, according to a Japanese newspaper.

The *Sankai Shimbun* reported from Seoul that among those executed were three middle-ranking military officers, including a regimental commander, and an unspecified number of officials from the public security ministry. The newspaper said Western intelligence learnt of the coup attempt from Chinese sources. The incident took place last year but no precise date or other details were made available.

The intelligence sources said rumours were circulating in the Chinese-Korean border area that the plotters tried to replace Mr Kim Jong Il with Mr Kim Sung Il, the president's illegitimate child. North Korea's news agency issued rare photographs of Mr Kim Jong Il as part of the buildup to his 50th birthday on February 16 amid rumours that he would soon succeed his father as state president.

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Compaq Deskpro Model 60	4Mb	60Mb	SVGA	£2598 Typical buying price

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16MHz 386SX	1Mb	100Mb	£1295	£1495	N/A
20MHz 386SX	2Mb	50Mb	£1195	£1395	£1495
20MHz 386SX	2Mb	100Mb	£1395	£1595	£1695
20MHz 486SX	4Mb	50Mb	£1595	£1795	£1895
20MHz 486SX	4Mb	100Mb	£1795	£1995	£2095
20MHz 486SX	4Mb	240Mb	£2145	£2345	£2445

All models include 1.44" floppy drive, keyboard, MS-DOS, hard disk models also include Windows 3.0 & mouse

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C&G Guardian Premier Shares			
New Accounts no longer available	Quarterly	10.02	7.51

C&G Guardian Super Shares			
New Accounts no longer available	Half Yearly	10.14	7.61
	Quarterly	10.02	7.51

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Inkatha 'organised attacks on ANC'

Gang man says police aided black violence

FROM GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

A CATALOGUE of intrigue and murder in South Africa's black townships, allegedly involving policemen, is emerging from a judicial commission of enquiry into political violence.

A young man testified yesterday that the Inkatha Freedom party, led by Chief Mangosuthu Buthe, recruited members of a criminal gang known as the Black Cats to attack supporters of the African National Congress with the backing of Inkatha gunmen. The man, a former member of the gang, said they had been provided with firearms and trained by a man with a South African police identification card, before embarking on a killing spree in Wesselson, in the eastern Transvaal. On one occasion, he said, they fire-bombed a lawyer's office at the suggestion of a local policeman.

The witness, whose identity was not disclosed, spoke of tension between the Black

Cats and a civic association allied to the ANC, which led to violence and ultimately the gang's recruitment by Inkatha. According to his testimony, the gang was formed in Wesselson early in 1990, supposedly as a vigilante group to combat crime. However, some members turned to assault and robbery, incurring the ire of the local civic association.

When the home of a gang member was burned down, the Black Cats assaulted civic leaders, and were in turn attacked by civic supporters and a large group from another township. At this point, an official of an Inkatha-affiliated trade union offered the gang support if it joined Inkatha. A group of armed men from Uthuli in the KwaZulu tribal homeland, the Inkatha stronghold, arrived to escort a funeral procession for a gang member killed in the clashes. They encountered a funeral party for an ANC supporter and

opened fire on the crowd, killing two people.

In August 1990, most of the Black Cats were taken to KwaZulu for training about firearms and abduction techniques. On their return to Wesselson, Inkatha was formally launched in the township and Chris Ngwenya, the gang leader, was elected to its local committee. He is now the chairman of the Inkatha youth brigade in the nearby town of Ermelo.

The gang then stepped up its attacks on ANC supporters with guns, grenades and knives, and gained the upper hand with the assistance of a policeman, the witness said. Funerals continued to precipitate clashes.

A peace agreement signed by Inkatha and the ANC last year has failed to curb political violence in the townships. Police said yesterday that four people were shot dead in their beds in a Natal township by unidentified men with AK47 rifles.

Israel's poor pin hope on election

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN PETAH TIKVA, ISRAEL

IF YITZHAK Shamir, the Israeli prime minister, ever suffers re-election jitters, then the muddy caravan site located on the edge of Petah Tikva deserves to figure in his campaign manager's bad dreams.

Buffeted by the wind and rain of a winter gale, the 240 mobile homes at Kfar Syrkin provide at best minimum housing for the Soviet immigrant and homeless Israeli families living in cramped conditions behind paper-thin glassfibre walls.

"We have never regretted coming to Israel," said Yelena, who left her native Uzbekistan two years ago with her husband and two daughters to escape the outbreak of bloody ethnic riots. "We are proud of being Israelis, but we are facing severe problems with finding jobs and somewhere decent to live."

Her complaints about government neglect and the problems of adjusting to life



At bay: Palestinian women yesterday trying to stop an Israeli policeman from arresting one of them at an east Jerusalem protest rally. Six women out of about 50 at the rally were held.

in a new home can be heard in similarly squalid settings the length and breadth of Israel, from the desert development city of Beersheba in the south to the Galilean towns of Carmel and Nazareth in the north.

Unemployment, already at a record level of more than 10 per cent, is rising

steadily, more than half a million Israelis are below the poverty line, and badly needed American financial assistance, in the form of \$10 billion (\$5.55 billion) in loan guarantees, has been delayed for nearly a year because of Israel's expansion of its Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Refugees threaten Kenya

FROM SAM KILLEY IN NAIROBI

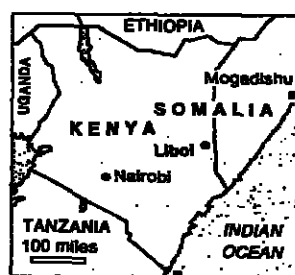
TENS of thousands of refugees from the civil war in Somalia have fled to Kenya, threatening the country's stability and putting a severe strain on already depleted food stocks, the United Nations said yesterday.

Silvester Awyee, representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Nairobi, said the number of Somali refugees in Kenya had risen from 15,000 to 90,000 since the civil war restarted last November. Every day 300 people, mostly children, were dying in the Liboi camp on the Kenya-Somali border, he said.

Many of the Somalis arriving in Kenya were heavily armed, and although the Kenyan army had attempted to take their guns away, Mr Awyee said that shooting could be heard every night in the camps. Two days ago a five-day-old child was killed by a stray bullet in Liboi and last week a Somali aid worker was shot by robbers in Ifa, the main UN camp, about 60 miles west of the frontier.

Kenya already faces a severe food shortage after drought in the east and north of the country, poor harvests, and bad management of the national cereals and produce board, which this week announced that it would have to import 1.1 million tonnes of maize by the end of March.

The World Food Programme estimates that the number of Somali refugees in Kenya will have swelled to 140,000 within two months. At present they are arriving at a rate of 1,000 a day.



Egyptians question 'spy pair'

Cairo: Egyptian security officials claimed yesterday that two Israeli Arabs detained on suspicion of spying for Israel had tried to cultivate a senior Egyptian military officer who alerted the authorities (Christopher Walker writes).

The two, a man aged 41 and his language student daughter, were still being interrogated yesterday awaiting formal charges. Their arrest in Cairo on Monday poses a serious threat to Israeli-Egyptian relations. The semi-official Egyptian press said both had visited Egypt a number of times on tourist visas.

City cut off

Algiers: New clashes were reported between security forces and Muslim fundamentalists in Batna, where three days of fighting have claimed 11 lives. The eastern Algerian city of 200,000 people was cut off from the rest of the country. (AP)

Camp toll rises

Hong Kong: Police searching a gutted hut for clues after Tuesday's arson attack at a Hong Kong camp for Vietnamese boat people found the body of a child, taking the death toll to 22. A group of 92 Vietnamese were charged with rioting. (Reuters)

Voters clash

Dhaka: At least 25 people were killed in Bangladesh in clashes between rival groups which wrecked voting in some 300 constituencies during the fortnight of mayoral elections. More than 1,500 people were arrested for causing unrest and vote-rigging.

Haiti reward

Port-au-Prince: Brigadier-General Raoul Cedras, aged 42, who led the September 30 coup that ousted President Aristide, was promoted to lieutenant-general. The general emphasised the need to preserve independence at any price. (AFP)

Why are there so many repeats on TV?

EMERGENCY
APPEAL
FOR ETHIOPIA

BANGLADESH
TIDAL WAVE
APPEAL

ERITREA AND TIGRAY
EMERGENCY

URGENT
APPEAL FOR
ERITREA

MOZAMBIQUE
EMERGENCY
APPEAL

CRISIS
IN AFRICA
APPEAL

MEXICO
EARTHQUAKE
DISASTER

SUDAN
EMERGENCY
APPEAL

BANGLADESH
CYCLONE DISASTER
APPEAL

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Is it because there are more disasters in the Third World?

No. Earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and droughts happen throughout the world. But in the developed countries, life quickly returns to normal.

In the Third World, on the other hand, disasters are compounded by poverty, with desperate consequences.

For example, last year in Bangladesh, a cyclone killed over 50,000 people. This was largely because families were forced to live on land prone to flooding because they were too poor to live anywhere safer.

Turning back to the original question, perhaps then there are more appeals because there are more wars?

There are wars all around the globe, but it is in the poorest countries that they have the most catastrophic consequences. For example, in Ethiopia, the war drove people from their once fertile farms, causing food

shortages and widespread starvation.

Here's another reason that's often given for the Third World's troubles: they don't know how to run their countries.

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For example, in 1989 in Sudan, hundreds of thousands of people starved to death. Yet at the same time, the Sudanese government gave \$97,000,000 to the West in debt repayments.

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Post code: _____

I would like to donate £ _____

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Rescue riddle for a crumbling Sphinx

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN CAIRO

A JUDICIAL investigation concluded yesterday that the fall of a 660lb slab of stone from the right shoulder of the battered Sphinx in February 1988 was the work of nature and not of man.

The Egyptian committee's long-awaited report exonerated the late Dr Ahmed Kadri. He was dismissed from his post as chief of the Egyptian antiquities organisation for allegedly causing the damage by permitting shoddy restoration work on the 4,600-year-old statue which guards the pyramids at Giza.

The committee of archaeological experts and university professors which carried out the investigation was established after an American Egyptologist made a formal complaint to the police about the fall, the most serious disaster to happen to the statue for many years.

The finding took into account blame placed by experts on a range of factors for the accelerating deterioration

of the enigmatic creature which has, according to Dr Sayid Tawfik, Dr Kadri's successor, disintegrated more in the past 50 years than in all its previous centuries combined.

These include the effect of atmospheric and underground pollutants from overpopulated Cairo and vibrations from work in nearby quarries. "Scholars from Egypt and around the world have given us good advice," Dr Tawfik said, "but nobody has been able to come up with a sure way to save our wonderful Sphinx."

In a new attempt to save the statue, Farouk Hosni, the culture minister, has convened a conference in Cairo this month of the world's leading experts on the Sphinx. It will include scientists from America, France, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland and Canada who will be asked to suggest ways of saving the country's most famous face.

**Chores
keep the
hausfrau
happy**

**FROM PATRICK MOSER
IN BONN**

IN GERMANY, a country often thought to be in the front line of the battle for equality of the sexes, the kitchen is still a woman's place — and not many German women are bothered about it. That at least is the impression given by a survey presented yesterday by Angela Merkel, Bonn's women's affairs minister.

Cleaning the house is also still considered by many to be a woman's job, if the survey is to be believed: 77 per cent of women in western Germany clean the home without help from the man in the house, and 78 per cent do the cooking without any help from their male partner. The figures for eastern Germany are 70 per cent and 74 per cent respectively.

"Nine per cent of women in the west [of Germany] and 7 per cent in the east believe the man should do more in the house," the IPOS research institute said in the study commissioned by the ministry. Yet 60 per cent of the 2,633 Germans interviewed believe more should be done for equality.

FOUR soldiers and a civilian died when a car bomb exploded in the heart of Madrid yesterday, increasing fears that Eta, the Basque separatist organisation, is determined to mar this year's Olympic Games. The morning rush-hour blast also wounded six people, one of them seriously.

The soldiers killed — three officers and their driver — were in a van which was passing when the bomb exploded just outside an army building, the Captaincy-General of Madrid. The fifth victim was a civil servant who worked for the army.

The bomb was a 90lb shrapnel-packed device. By



González: will not bow to "bloody blackmail"

nightfall, no organisation had admitted planting it, but the assumption is that it was Eta's work. The blast was the first terrorist incident in Madrid this year. Last month, Eta gunmen murdered five people in attacks in Barcelona, Bilbao and Valencia.

The explosion has intensified fears not only for the Olympics in Barcelona but for two other international events in Spain this year: the Expo '92 World Fair in Seville and Madrid's period as European city of culture. Earlier this week, the mayors of the three cities were called to the capital to meet José Luis Corcuera, the interior minister, to discuss the security problems posed by terrorism.

The defence ministry has already detailed members of the armed forces to co-operate with the police during the Olympics and Expo '92. But, as Pasqual Maragall, the mayor of Barcelona, admitted yesterday, the big security problem remains the five-month run-up to the games.

Felipe González, the prime minister, called a press conference yesterday soon after the explosion to announce that he was asking the attorney-general to investigate whether apologists for Eta should be allowed to continue with impunity to defend the

organisation's violent independence campaign. He clearly had in mind the political party called Herri Batasuna, a small group in the Basque country which sympathises with Eta's aims.

There has been talk in recent days of proscribing the organisation, whose leaders frequently feature on television and radio and in the press to defend Eta's actions. Señor González said it was intolerable that "so-called political leaders who are no more than shameful servants of terrorist mafias should continue to issue threats against the state with apparent impunity".

Yesterday's attack also comes amid rumours that Eta may have been planning temporarily to suspend its violent activities in an attempt to persuade the Madrid government to negotiate with it. Señor González made it clear that there would be no political deals with terrorists. His government, he said, would not bow to this "bloody blackmail".

A high-contrast, black and white photograph. In the center, a person is silhouetted against a bright, grainy background. The person is standing on a tall, thin, vertical pole. They are holding a large, dark, wing-like object, possibly a surfboard or a piece of fabric, which is angled upwards and to the right. The background is a textured, grainy surface, possibly a wall or a large rock formation, with a bright, overexposed area on the right side. The overall image has a high-contrast, almost abstract quality.

Fire brigade: workers making the final preparations yesterday for the Olympic torch at Albertville, France, which will be lit tomorrow at the start of the 16th winter Games. In a break with tradition, the flame will not be lit directly. Instead, a runner will

climb 80 steps and use the Olympic torch, lit in Greece, to start a ball of fire burning along a cable up to the huge bowl 100ft above the ground. Organisers were due to announce yesterday who will light the flame. It was anticipated that the honour would go

to Nathalie Bouvier, the French skier. Bouvier, aged 22, the downhill silver-medal winner at last year's world championships in Austria, would have been one of France's main medal hopes but has been unable to compete since she broke both legs a year ago.

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK
AND TIM JUDAH IN BELGRADE

CROATIA yesterday dropped its objections to the deployment of United Nations peacekeepers in the former Yugoslav republic, leaving only one rebel Serb leader blocking the implementation of the plan.

Franjo Tudjman, Croatia's president, informed the UN Security Council that he was now ready to accept the deployment of 10,000 UN peacekeepers in the three Serb enclaves in Croatia. Diplomats here said that Milan Babic, the leader of the Serb enclave of Krajina, was the only remaining opponent of the UN "blue berets." Several senior Western envoys expressed hope that Mr Babic could be brought into line by pressure from the Serb-dominated rural federal presidency in Belgrade.

Dr Tudjman had initially accepted the UN proposal to create UN-protected areas in Krajina and eastern and western Slavonia, where the majority of Croatia's 600,000 Serbs live. But when member states of the European Community recognised Croatia last month, he insisted that the Zagreb government retain control over local government and the police in any UN-patrolled areas.

His change of policy was an embarrassment to Germany.

which led the move to recognise Croatia, and he came under intense German pressure to revert to his original stance. He did so in a letter to the security council less than an hour before it was to meet to discuss a draft resolution calling on both sides to accept the UN peacekeeping plan unconditionally.

In an attempt to head off the violent disintegration of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the European Community is to broker talks next week in Sarajevo, the republic's capital. The move was announced yesterday after Lord Carrington, the chairman of the EC peace conference on Yugoslavia, held talks in Sarajevo on the second day of his trip to the country.

Despite the bitter invective traded between the leaders of the three groups that make up Bosnia — Croats, Serbs and Muslims — they have never stopped talking. The leader of the main Serb party, Radovan Karadzic, said: "Carrington said 'maybe you could speed up talks if they were supervised by the EC.'" It was not clear yesterday if Lord Carrington, already known to be exasperated by the practical collapse of the existing EC peace talks, would chair the Bosnian conference himself.

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ZAGREB

The outbreak of peace in Yugoslavia could leave hundreds of foreign mercenaries, most of whom threw in their lot with Croatia, out of a job. Scores of disgruntled soldiers of fortune, evidently feeling they are not getting enough fighting, have begun drifting away from the static front lines at the Slavonian towns of Osijek and Vinkovci since Yugoslavia's longest lasting ceasefire came into effect on January 3.

Some volunteers believe the Zagreb authorities would not be unhappy to see the often unpredictable foreign warriors depart, now that the hastily formed Croatian army has achieved a modicum of organisation. "I don't think it will even be 'thanks and goodbye,'" said Ken from Portsmouth gloomily over gin and tonic at Zagreb's Esplanade hotel, a favourite haunt of mercenaries. "Just 'goodbye,' and the Croats did it on their own. I don't think I will be staying much longer."

One group of Britons was sent on enforced leave from Vinkovci last week to languish at the Baronga barracks in Zagreb. In the beer cellar

under Osijek's main square. "Captain Carl" from Liverpool, second-in-command of the "First International Brigade" grouping soldiers from a dozen nationalities rested his sub-machinegun by a dimly lit table and said another group of Britons left last week. "They couldn't see the point of staying during the ceasefire." He said morale is good among five Englishmen in the International Brigade.

Firm estimates of the number of foreigners left are hard to come by. Allan Hetherington-Cleberley, a genial Australian who said he had been appointed "commander international Zagreb," claimed English-speaking soldiers alone still number as many as 500.

Brigadier Karlo Gorinsek, commander of the Croatian first operational zone, covering 200 miles of front including Osijek and Vinkovci, said: "In our operational zone there are few foreigners — 20 or 30 let us say." **Tonka Jelic**, an Australian who is the new public relations officer for the International Brigade, said it numbers 70 recruits.

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Russia gives freedom to last political prisoners

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

IN A symbolic end to one of the grimmest chapters in 20th-century history, ten people regarded by the authorities as the last political prisoners in Russia will today walk free from the notorious Perm 35 forced labour camp.

Their release from a prison well known for its freezing isolation cells and starvation diet is intended to give substance to President Yeltsin's claim before the United Nations last week that "in free Russia there are no political prisoners". The freeing of the ten will also underpin Mr Yeltsin's contention that his country, which in its Soviet incarnation used to react with fury at Western criticism of its human rights record, now positively welcomed monitoring by foreign governments and lobby groups.

In its zeal to stamp out an institution that won the Soviet Union the opprobrium of the world, the Russian authorities may even have interpreted the concept of "prisoner of conscience" even more broadly than many Western countries. As of a year ago, the Soviet authorities were able to claim that they had released from Perm all prisoners convicted under the notorious article 70 of the penal code, which proscribes "agitation and propaganda against the state". But human rights groups countered that the prison still contained about a dozen inmates who were convicted of crimes — such as selling military secrets or even manslaughter — carried out in the course of politically inspired acts, such as illegal crossing of the border.

No less an authority than Oleg Kalugin, the former KGB's counter-intelligence chief, contended this week that "Russia is perhaps the freest country in the world", given that "there are no controls on the media, no restrictions on human rights and no

political prisoners". In a debate in the Russian parliament this week, much was made of the fact that the republic's new security ministry — the successor to the KGB — will have no department whose specific purpose is to monitor and harass ideological and religious dissent.

But many a Russian liberal fears that the republic's current zeal to meet the highest international standards on human rights represents only an isolated moment in the country's history as it swings from the communist form of totalitarianism to a neo-fascist variety. Already the human rights record of several of Russia's partners in the commonwealth — notably Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan — has prompted acute concern among international rights campaigners.

Conservative diehards, for their part, have launched a campaign for the release of a dozen elderly men they call "political prisoners" — the generals and the party bureaucrats who mounted the August coup against Mikhail Gorbachev.

Izvestia sent a team of reporters to visit the conspirators in the jail on the outskirts of Moscow and last night published photographs of them, as well as a list of the former Soviet prime minister, Valentin Pavlov, looking hardly less portly than before. Vasil Starodubtsev, the hard-line farmers' leader who was a member of the ill-fated eight-man junta, told *Izvestia's* correspondents: "I have no complaints, apart from the fact that I am innocent."

As well as wading through dozens of volumes of evidence against them accumulated by the Russian public prosecutor, Mr Starodubtsev said that he fretted about the "total collapse and catastrophe" that was now facing the country's agriculture.

Yeltsin fears fascist upsurge

FROM PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS

PRESIDENT Yeltsin yesterday gave his most vivid warning yet of the dangers facing Russia's fledgling democracy if the West does not fully back his reform programme.

He told a reception in the town hall to mark his state visit to France that without such support "a dictatorship will emerge". Everything his government had achieved would be threatened by opponents on the extreme right.

"I have faith in the reforms, which are irreversible," he said. "But should they fail, I can already feel the breath on our neck of those who wear the black and the brown shirts." Faced with that, Mr Yeltsin insisted, "we have the right to count on the international community for help".

Evidently anxious to bolster his case in France, already the second biggest lender to the Commonwealth of Independent States, Mr Yeltsin said that Russia was ready to make big reductions in its strategic nuclear arsenal. Of France's refusal to cut back on its own nuclear forces, he said: "We respect that position... we hope that once the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons is underway in Russia, France will in turn refrain from augmenting such armaments."



Triumphal exit: Mr Yeltsin is ushered past a Republican Guard after a ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe

The Russian leader's discussions with President Mitterrand on Wednesday were apparently also dominated by the issue of nuclear disarmament. An Elysée Palace adviser said afterwards that there had been a "convergence of views on the notion of defence sufficiency, of minimal deterrence". This seemed to suggest that Mr Yeltsin prudently did not repeat the view he expressed before leaving Moscow that France must reduce its nuclear capacity in response to disarmament by the superpowers.

Mr Yeltsin responded to the warmth of his welcome in France, and to the encouraging news that Russia will get the lion's share of some \$415 million in French credits previously allocated to the Soviet Union, by predicting "an entirely new relationship between our two states for many years to come".

For their part, French officials were still doing their best to bury unhappy memories of the Elysée's snub of Mr Yeltsin on a previous visit to Paris during the Gorbachev era. M. Mitterrand's aides were yesterday spreading

praise of the Russian leader's direct and open style of doing business. Yesterday's official programme even provided for Mr Yeltsin and his wife Naina to meet an admittedly carefully selected assortment of Russians who had chosen exile in Paris in preference to continuing to live under communism.

Kiev lets Crimea have voice

Kiev: Ukraine yesterday granted residents of Crimea the right to take part in decisions about the future of their autonomous peninsula, including division of property.

A high-level delegation from Kiev signed a joint statement on division of powers with Crimean authorities. It also provided for the creation of a free economic zone in the region. (Reuters)

Port falls

Moscow: Georgia's military council said its troops have captured the port of Sukhumi, the last stronghold loyal to Zviad Gamsakhurdia, the ousted president, virtually ending weeks of bloody resistance. It was occupied without a shot. (Reuters)

US pledges aid

Riga: Vice-President Quayle, visiting Estonia and Latvia, pledged extra American aid of \$18 million (£10 million) for the three Baltic states and endorsed swift withdrawal of Russian troops from their territories. He will be in Lithuania today. (Reuters)

Poverty bites

Moscow: Russia's rush towards a market economy has pushed 95 per cent of Moscow's residents below the poverty line, Yuri Luzhkov, the city's deputy mayor, said in the latest in a series of gloomy reports on shortages and high prices. (AP)

Siberian town shivers in dark

While the federation awaits energy cuts, in one Siberian city they have already happened, Peter Conrad writes from Khabarovsk

When Lyudmila Golovina came home with her new baby from maternity hospital this winter, she found there was no central heating, hot water or gas in her block of flats.

Like tens of others who lived in the building, she responded by plugging in a portable heater. It blew the fuses, plunging the whole building into darkness as well. It then took several days before all the connections were finally restored.

"It has been the same story all over the city," said her father, Valer, a journalist on a local newspaper. "They simply did not prepare for the cold." It has been a hard winter for Khabarovsk, an industrial city near the Chinese border, where the temperature regularly plunges to -25C and a bitter wind blows almost continuously across the frozen Amur river. While the rest of Russia waits for the oil to run out, Khabarovsk's 600,000 people can be forgiven for thinking that they have been through it all already.

Since November, one by one, whole sections of the city have been blacked out and deprived of energy. Several thousand people had to see in the new year by candlelight.

For the time being at least, the situation appears to have stabilised. Some 200 million roubles (£20 million at official tourist rates) of special aid were promised and, in typical Russian fashion, the appearance of the bosses from the far-away capital generated the superhuman effort that was necessary to work miracles.

The weather, too, has warmed slightly, edging a few degrees up towards freezing point. Even so, it will be well into April before the snow eventually melts across Russia's far east, and another icy burst could prove



disastrous. At least in their harshness, this winter's troubles appear to have been unique to Khabarovsk. Other cities in the region have suffered temporary breakdowns both this year and last.

According to the locals, the most plausible explanation is that nobody got around to carrying out the annual prophylactic repairs that every piece of Soviet-made machinery requires.

But it is also a symptom of a broader energy problem affecting much of the former Soviet Union. The anti-nuclear sentiment provoked by the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in 1986 blew a hole in the country's energy programme by forcing the closure of several existing plants and the cancellation of new ones. Oil output, meanwhile, has been plummeting.

The problems are compounded by the highly centralised heating and hot water system which keeps most Russian cities going through the winter. In theory, it is an admirable communal service, banishing all fears of hypothermia and providing cheap, plentiful energy for all.

In practice, it is a highly inefficient and complex system which requires almost continuous care and attention. Necessarily, by pumping heat over large distances in sub-zero temperatures in unlagged pipes, it also ends up losing as much as 50 per cent of it along the way.

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'Stupid Tyson was butt of joke'

FROM CHARLES BRENNER IN INDIANAPOLIS

DESIREE Washington, the woman who accused Mike Tyson of rape, joked about the boxer's money and stupidity after he asked her out for the evening, a rival beauty contestant told the court yesterday.

In defence testimony aimed at countering the saintly portrait of Ms Washington painted by the prosecution, Marilyn Whittington said she had bumped into the accuser in the bathroom just after Tyson had visited the contestants in the Miss Black America beauty pageant in Indianapolis last July. "She told me she had met Tyson and was going to go out with him. I said, 'Are you really going to?' She said, 'Of course I'm going. He's Mike Tyson and he's got a lot of money and he's dumb. You saw what Robin Givens got out of him.'"

Robin Givens was the actress to whom Tyson was briefly married while he was world heavyweight champion. She won more than \$10 million from him after suing for divorce on the ground of physical cruelty.

Last week, Ms Washington, a university student and Sunday school teacher, said she had made any such statement.

Attempt to outflank Democrats

Health care for all pledged by Bush

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON



Gephardt: called the plan "totally deficient"

PRESIDENT Bush yesterday moved to negate one of the Democrats' strongest suits in the forthcoming presidential election by unveiling a plan that he pledged would give all Americans access to the world's best health care.

He offered a system of vouchers and tax credits to give health insurance to the 35 million Americans who presently cannot afford it, and to alleviate the exploding costs of insurance for middle-income families.

The plan, vehemently denounced by the Democrats, would cost \$100 billion (£55.2 billion), as it was implemented over the next five years, and \$35 billion a year thereafter, but with America's budget deficit already at record levels Mr Bush ducked the question of how it would be paid for.

At the last moment he had deleted proposals to raise funds by taxing the employer-paid benefits of highly paid workers and deeply cutting the Medicare programme for the elderly. These steps were considered politically too dangerous in an election year.

Mr Bush instead offered Congress 38 pages of financing options, leaving them to make the tough decisions. In doing so, he virtually ensuring that there will be no legis-

lation enacted in the foreseeable future, but this was an exercise in political posturing to begin with.

Polls show health care and its exorbitant costs to be one of the most potent electoral issues this year. It is one on which the Democrats have so far made all the running, proposing that employers would be taxed to finance a national insurance scheme if they did not buy private health insurance for their workers. One poll said that Americans trust the Democrats rather than Mr Bush on the issue, by a 60 per cent to 29 per cent margin.

Mr Bush had to come up with some counter-proposal,

lest he appeared indifferent, but one clearly based on a market-driven philosophy. Setting the tone for the coming campaign, he said in Cleveland, Ohio: "My plan will preserve what works, and reform what doesn't." The Democrats' proposals were "a prescription for disaster ... a back-door route to nationalised health care" that would create a hugely expensive new bureaucracy no one wanted.

"When you get right down to it, there are two fundamental health care choices," said Mr Bush, who was flying on to the West Coast to promote his plan. "We can adopt a system that's been a proven failure all over the world — nationalised health care. Or we can reform our present system, which has its faults, certainly, but which can also provide the highest-quality care on Earth."

Richard Gephardt, the House majority leader, called it "totally deficient" and a "non-plan" that "will put more money into the pockets of insurance companies and doctors, but will do nothing to make health coverage affordable or ensure Americans have access to quality care". The plan envisages that American families with annual incomes of up to \$30,000 can receive up to \$3,750 a year, through tax credits, tax deductions or vouchers to pay for health care. Mr Bush also called for new limits on medical malpractice lawsuit settlements.

America spent \$27.1 billion on health care in 1990, a figure that has now soared to \$73.8 billion, more than any other industrial country.



Death charges: Dr Jack Kevorkian, who advocated doctor-assisted suicide for the seriously ill, listening to his indictment in Oakland County circuit court, Pontiac, Michigan. Dr Kevorkian was arrested this week in connection with the deaths of two seriously ill women who used the "suicide

machine" invented by him. A grand jury indicted him on Monday on two counts of murder and one count of delivery of a controlled substance, the Oakland prosecutor said. Dr Kevorkian's lawyer said the ending of the suffering of two chronically ill women was an act of humanity.

Peaceful battle begins

The presidents of Russia and South Africa, Boris Yeltsin, and F.W. de Klerk, and anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela are among nominees for the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize, it was reported in Oslo. "So far we've received 105 nominations for 83 individuals and 22 organisations," Geir Lundestad, head of the Nobel Institute, said. The winner will be announced in October.

Jean-Pierre Rampal, whose lyrical flute-playing has captivated the world, said before a 70th birthday celebration at the Lincoln Centre in New York: "I cannot understand why America is so violent." Of the ubiquitous personal stereo, he added: "We are arriving to (sic) a generation of deaf people. It's a catastrophe."

A horse-drawn funeral carriage followed by hundreds of fans and dozens of musicians carried the body of Willie Dixon through the South Side streets of Chicago to the sounds of music he made famous. Dixon died in California last week at the age of 76. Bands stood on corners along a route down Muddy Waters Drive and past the Checker Board Lounge where Dixon was a fixture for years.

Former French prime minister Michel Rocard has been honoured by Australia for his work to protect the Antarctic. Rocard was appointed an honorary Companion of the Order of Australia, the nation's highest honour, which he received for the central role he played in delivering French government support to Australia's attempt to ban mining in the Antarctic.

Iran plans to make a documentary film on the political life of its revolutionary leader Ayatollah Khomeini, who died in 1989, said Muhammad Ali Ansari, who added that Khomeini's shrine, south of Tehran, would be expanded into a "touristic and science-oriented" complex.

A Lebanese daily newspaper, *ad-Diyar*, said police had stopped it publishing an interview with rebel Christian general, Michel Aoun, who is now living in exile in France. Police listened to a taped recording of the interview then barred publication.

A parchment scroll offering the freedom of Nottingham Castle and Sherwood Forest to Kevin Costner, of Hollywood's *Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves*, was signed by the Sheriff of Nottingham and the county council chairman.

Monkeys drive police nuts

FROM JOANNA PITMAN IN TOKYO

LEANING forward gingerly over his holstered pistol, Police Sergeant Toda played mother to a group of children, pouring tea from a pink Donald Duck pot and handing round butterfly cakes.

But this was no infant-school tea-party. Sergeant Toda, aged 32, is the benevolent face of the law in Japan. He is the local bobby in Itsukaichi, a small mountain community 75 miles west of Tokyo. His home doubles as the police station and on most afternoons locals drop in for tea and a gossip.

One of 235 policemen in the Tokyo metropolitan area who operate from their homes, Sergeant Toda is responsible for 600 households spread over 50 square miles. That he can single-handedly cover his beat and still host tea parties says much about the local crime rate.

The scourge of his professional life is not murder or mugging, but monkeys. "Last week a wild monkey came down from the mountains and stole some carrots. I took details of the goods and suspect, but there is not much I can do," he said.

On a recent Saturday evening he was called out at 11.30 to deal with a distraught mother whose daughter, aged 25, had stayed out past her 11 pm curfew. The previous day he had spent the morning coaxing a cat down from a persimmon tree and the afternoon mediating in a

trivial quarrel between the futon-maker and the sake brewer.

Sergeant Toda is a gun-toting nanny on Japan's national payroll; his charges, the inhabitants of Itsukaichi. In all his 13 years as a policeman, he has not once had the chance to use his pistol or his truncheon, for his beat is no more hazardous than that in Trumpton.

The most serious incident he can recall was the theft of £160 in 1987. "I got a telephone call about a robbery and rushed



round to the house, but the thief had fled the scene. I took fingerprints and I am still investigating the case, but it looks as if he got away."

Were Sergeant Toda to recognise his chief suspect driving past the police station tomorrow, he would not have much chance of arresting him, since his chief mode of transport is a bicycle.

Army coup enquiry clears politicians

FROM TONY BIANCHI IN CARACAS

THE Venezuelan government yesterday ruled out the participation of political factions and civilian movements in Tuesday's coup attempt by a group of army officers that belong to a right-wing nationalist clan. Virgilio Abila Vivas, the interior minister, said investigators have found no evidence of any political or civilian group being implicated in the aborted coup.

General Fernando Ochoa Anich, the defence minister, meanwhile, insisted that only 14 military officials were killed and 57 injured from both sides, denying reports that gave the death toll at 300. However, Caracas pol-

ice sources said that the final toll, which could not yet be confirmed, was likely to climb to 60.

The military command that remained loyal to President Pérez began to question captured officers and soldiers who made up the 1,600-man force that tried to assassinate the head of state and seize power. A high military court official said most of the rebel soldiers were believed to have been forced to fight and would probably be discharged without being sentenced. Rebel leaders could receive up to 25 years' imprisonment, be stripped of their ranks, and cashiered.

Eichmann file 'not in archive'

FROM ED McCULLOUGH IN BUENOS AIRES

A NAZI hunter who studied seven Argentine government files dating back decades said that he was most struck by what was not there.

"Where is the Eichmann file?" Shimon Samuels, of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre for Holocaust Studies, said on Wednesday. "The file that should have been the thickest of all is not there."

On Monday, President Menem ordered the national archives to collect information on Nazis who fled here after the war. Government agencies were given 30 days to comply. The seven federal police files included two each on Josef Mengele, the "Angel

of Death" at Auschwitz, and on Martin Bormann, Hitler's deputy. The others dealt with Nazis such as Walter Kutschmann and Edouard Roschmann, now dead; and Josef Schwammberger, aged 79, extradited to Germany in 1990 and on trial in Stuttgart for his alleged role in the deaths of Jews in forced labour camps.

But on the man who drew up plans to exterminate the Jews of Europe, and who was kidnapped here in 1960 by Israeli agents, tried, convicted, hanged and cremated — nothing. "I cannot accept that it is an oversight," Mr Samuels said. (AP)

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Nintendo peril hits Hollywood

Charles Bremner on American fears of growing Japanese cultural power

A cartoon elicited a few bitter chuckles over American breakfast tables the other day, after Tokyo politicians delivered their latest shower of insults to Yankee pride. It featured a newspaper reporting that the Japanese had taken over motherhood, baseball and apple-pie, the three sacred symbols of America. Over the past week, as the prime minister, Kichi Miyazawa, has aired his own thoughts on American sloth, life has caught up with the cartoon and added a sadistic twist. A consortium led by the Nintendo company wants to take over the Mariners, the beloved baseball team of Seattle, and the town is begging the baseball authority to let them do so, because if the \$100 million deal fails, they will go to Florida. Even Tom Foley, the congressional speaker and Washington state native, has joined the drive to persuade Fay Vincent, the national baseball commissioner, to rescind the rule which bars any foreigners but Canadians from owning teams.

Beyond the northern Pacific rim, an area which long ago learned to trade and live with the Japanese, the notion of Nintendo saving the Mariners has been greeted with resignation and mourning. Is nothing sacred, ask talk-show hosts and commentators? "First they took our cars, now it's baseball," said a barman in Indianapolis, a good vantage point for gauging the anguish middle America is feeling over the triumph of the new evil empire, a force which has taken on the demonic image the Russians used to enjoy.

A month after President Bush's tragicomic trade trip to Tokyo, it seems to many Americans that the baseball episode is fresh evidence that the dreaded Japanese march on American culture has begun. Weren't we all naive, goes the argument, to think that we could sell Hollywood, record companies and all those hotels, golf-courses and landmarks to the Japanese and then believe all their promises, like those made by Sony to Columbia Pictures, that they would "stay out of the creative process"?

There has been no shortage of ammunition in recent days for those who see the imminent replacement of Big Macs by Big Takamaki. On Monday, Michael Jackson was coaxed back onto planet earth to announce that he would undertake a world tour. Since everyone knows Mr Jackson is terrified of performing outside a studio these days, the pop press assumed that Sony, with whom Mr Jackson has a billion dollar multimedia contract, was worried about his sagging fortunes and had twisted his gloved arm. It escaped no one's attention that the venue for his appearance is the ardecho splendour of the Radio City Music Hall, the jewel of that New York institution, the Rockefeller Centre, now owned by Mitsubishi.

Japanophobes had their worst fears confirmed on Wednesday with a headline in *The New York*

Times: "Hollywood Drops Film. Bowing to the Sumos". The burly wrestler had extinguished a Sony-Columbia film called *Hell Camp*, which was to have been directed by Milos Forman, the director of *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Amadeus*. Sony and all the Americans in the \$25 million project are denying that it was cancelled because it painted an unflattering portrait of Japan's most popular sport. Maybe so, mused the *Times*, but why did a group of Hollywood's most seasoned moguls bow to the objections of a foreign sports federation? The Sumo episode reminded many of last year's affair over *Mr Baseball*, a film about the comic adventures of an American player in Japan, which was purged of anti-Japanese jokes after Matsushita took over Universal Studios.

A dark Japanese hand has been discerned behind revisions of a likely blockbuster novel published this week: *Rising Sun* by Michael Crichton. This time Mr Crichton is not proposing planetary anni-



Milos Forman: his sumo film has been dropped

hilation from outer space, as he did in *The Andromeda Strain*, nor under the hooves of stampeding dinosaurs, as he did in *Jurassic Park*. His alien menace of 1992 bows and smiles a lot and wears a dark suit. Late last year, Knopf took the rare step of recalling advance copies from reviewers and replacing them with a "corrected" version, which softened some of Mr Crichton's harsher observations about Japan. There was absolutely no connection, insisted the author, with the fact that Matsushita-Universal had just agreed to finance a Steven Spielberg film of *Jurassic Park*.

Set in Los Angeles, the novel opens with the murder of a blonde who has been having sex with a sleazy Japanese tycoon on a conference table during the opening of the new headquarters of the Nakamoto Corporation. Ostensibly a whodunnit, the book is really a seminar on the Japanese psyche and its influence in America. Half of *Los Angeles*, from the police to the universities and press, has been bought by Nakamoto. As the hero detective puts it: "Whoever pays for an institution controls it. If the Japanese are willing to put up the money — and if the American government and American industry aren't — then the Japanese will control."

Some of the reviewers are accusing Mr Crichton of basic Japan-bashing, a sport which has stood in for baseball during this winter season, but the author and some fairly uncharitable politicians are treating the book as an intelligent "wake-up call" which supports the argument of those who believe that America, as an open, culturally diverse country, must learn to live with Japanese power. It can do this, they say, not by fleeing into protectionism and paranoia, but by strengthening native institutions and, if necessary, by borrowing some un-American models — such as a national industrial policy.

The Ashdown affair: two views on the conflict of public interest and privacy

When the actor Gordon Kaye lay in a hospital bed recovering from severe head injuries, a journalist and a photographer from the *Sunday Sport* gained access to his room, took pictures and conducted an "interview". He sought an injunction to stop them publishing, but found the only limited remedy that the court could provide was to order that there be no publication unless the newspaper made it clear the information was obtained without Mr Kaye's consent. The Court of Appeal later confirmed that "in English law there is no right to privacy".

The case of Paddy Ashdown, and the conduct of the press, again focuses attention on the limited extent to which English law protects the fundamental right to be left alone. In his statement on Wednesday, Mr Ashdown explained that he "was advised and believed that I had every right to defend my privacy".

The law does recognise the right to privacy in some contexts. The Broadcasting Complaints Commission has powers to adjudicate upon complaints of "unwarranted

News from the gutter

Everyone should have a right to be left alone, argues

David Pannick

infringement of privacy" in broadcast programmes. The right of rape victims to anonymity under the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1976, and the law of trespass also protects some aspects of privacy.

The law of confidence applies when information is secret, was imparted in circumstances of confidence, and has been used in an unauthorised way. These criteria were plainly satisfied in respect of the information stolen from the offices of Mr Ashdown's solicitor, which is why Mr Ashdown was granted an injunction to restrain publication by the *News of the World*.

But there are severe limits to the utility of an action for breach of confidence: there are many occasions when a newspaper has information which damages personal privacy but which has not been imparted in circumstances creating a duty of confidence.

Convention on Human Rights, to which the United Kingdom is party, asserts that (subject to exceptions) "everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence". Of course, it may not be easy to define the scope of a right to be left alone. What the public is interested in is not necessarily identical to what is in the public interest.

The laws of other countries do define a tort of invasion of privacy, however. For the law of this country to deny a remedy for such a wrong whatever the circumstances is to confound any sense of decency and to deprive individuals of protection of a right fundamental to their integrity. The press has shown few signs of taking the last chance to display self-control granted to it in 1990 by the Calcutt Committee.

What justifiably concerns opponents of a law of privacy is that

it would add to the power of the judiciary (not all of whom are known for their commitment to freedom of expression) to determine what we learn about public figures.

A solution would be for the law to recognise a right to privacy, with a remedy in damages for any breach. The judiciary would have no power to prevent the imparting of information to the public, but those newspapers which breached the right to privacy would have to compensate the victim, with exemplary damages being awarded to penalise the newspaper when there has been a flagrant abuse. Privacy law would echo libel law. Such a solution would accord with the practical reality demonstrated by Mr Ashdown's case: injunctions are of little value in seeking to stop the flow of information. But a legal duty to respect privacy would also impose on the press an obligation to consider with more care the consequences that publication may have for its victims.

David Pannick is a practising barrister and a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

Ashdown's loneliest day

The Liberal Democrat leader spoke about his future to Peter Riddell

A WEEK IN POLITICS

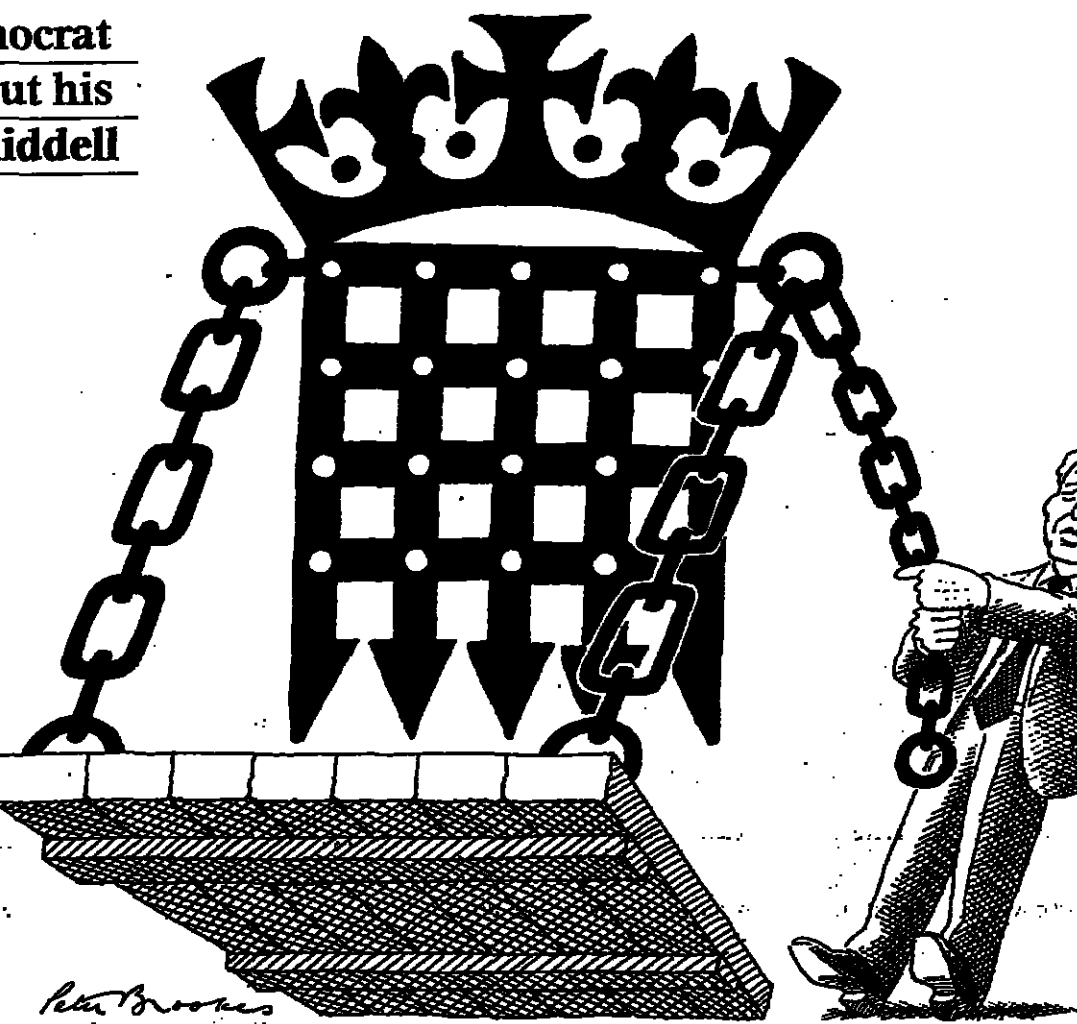
Paddy Ashdown has been bruised by the past week's events, however much he pretends that it is business as usual. Talking to me yesterday in his Westminster office, he was, understandably, slightly nervous and preoccupied with the details of the affair. He smoked a cigarette, which he never does in public.

Nevertheless, he was more resilient than I can imagine many politicians being in the same circumstances. Possibly as a legacy of his days in the services, he has remarkable self-control. Never an enthusiastic insider in the Westminster club, he can talk about politics in a detached, almost clinical way, with at times a chilling self-analysis. His language, his metaphors, are often more like those of a businessman than a politician.

Mr Ashdown recognises that there may be immediate political repercussions from his admission of his brief relationship with a former secretary more than five years ago. So far he has received strong support from parliamentary colleagues and from Liberal Democrats in the country. That is a reflection both of his success over the past three years and of political necessity: there is no alternative to closing ranks. When we talked, he had just returned from a consultation with party staff in Croydon Street and hearing reports from the regions.

There may be second thoughts in the next few days, and yesterday Mr Ashdown seemed braced for a short-term drop both in his own high personal popularity and his party's rating. His hope is clearly that most members of the public, as well as the political world, will treat his admission as an ordinary, and common, human failing.

If there is no sign of self-pity or bitterness in Mr Ashdown's comments, there is anger, over the invasion of privacy in the use of a



stolen document. This was the theme to which he kept returning. The issue here has become blurred by the issuing, and later lifting, of an injunction against all Fleet Street newspapers a week ago. Mr Ashdown recognises that this offered only a slim hope of keeping the matter secret, but it did give him time to alert his MPs and visit his Yeovil constituency on Monday. Thus he could prepare the disclosure on his own terms.

However, the Ashdown camp still believes that the injunction was fully justified, since what was being offered to the *News of the World* was a confidential statement stolen from his solicitor's safe. If the law cannot in practice prevent such documents becoming public — forced out by devices

such as "we are being gagged stories" — then there is nothing to stop the publication of other information obtained illegally, for instance through wire taps or tapes.

As an affected party who has, incidentally, opposed a privacy law, Mr Ashdown does not believe he can discuss his views in public, although close advisers such as Sir David Steel and Lord Holme of Cheltenham have sought to turn attention onto this issue. There is a lot of public and political sympathy for this line.

These specific and legitimate complaints have fuelled the existing feverish debate about the bias of the press, dirty tricks and smears which had already been developing after the singularly mundane revelations about Neil

Kinnock's talks with Soviet diplomats. All sides tend to exaggerate the political influence of the media, and although television is by far the most common source of news, the press still matters, since roughly three-quarters of the public also reads a daily paper.

Obviously the British press disproportionately supports the Tories. More than 70 per cent of papers sold are pro-Tory, compared with 50 per cent in 1950. But of course this masks vast variations in the degree to which individual papers are partisan.

Nevertheless, Labour has a fair grievance against some of the highly tendentious tabloid coverage of the past six weeks, matched in style, if not scale, by attacks on the Tories in the *Daily Mirror*.

Such bias may be wrong and often nauseating, but it probably has little effect on voters. Politicians often behave as if readers take note of every word and headline. But papers are bought for many reasons other than their political stance. Most people read a paper roughly in line with their own position, but many do not. In 1987, some 31 per cent of Sun readers voted Labour, while 20 per cent of buyers of the *Daily Mirror* similarly ignored the paper's line and voted Tory.

Some readers are blissfully ignorant of their paper's political line. In 1987, 37 per cent of readers of *The Sun* did not realise it was pro-Tory. In general, the stridency of the tabloids merely reinforces existing opinions.

Academics such as Martin Harrop and William Miller believe the press has little direct influence on changes in voting behaviour when compared to the existing views of voters. The biggest impact is among those who usually pay scant attention to politics and who are therefore most susceptible to media influence. It is not surprising, perhaps, that the biggest shift to the Tories during the last election occurred among the relatively non-political Sun and *Daily Star* readers.

More important than what the press says during elections — when there is anyway the offsetting effect of carefully balanced television and radio coverage and the parties' own broadcasts — is the media's longer-term impact on opinions by the manner in which it sets the terms of the policy debate.

As I left the relative calm of Mr Ashdown's office yesterday, I noticed on television the endlessly repeated pictures of the real victims of the tabloid pressures: his wife and former secretary. However, away from the fevered atmosphere of Westminster and Fleet Street, the public seems unexcited by so-called scandals, smears or smears. People may eagerly read all about the Ashdown affair, but when they come to vote, I doubt they will be much influenced by this week's tabloid excesses.

...and moreover

ALAN COREN

On behalf of the five million Britons who are like me, I wish to apologise to the 55 million who are not. For they are on their own, this week. They will get no help from us. Whatever the depths of their distress or need, our eyes are blind and our ears deaf. Frankly, my dears, we do not give a damn. We are too busy confronting our own fears, facing situations head-on, and generally looking out for good old number one. Or, rather, good old numbers one to five million. And we have been strongly advised not to support others, for the very good reason that both the Sun and Mercury are adversely affected by Pluto.

Which brings me to an adverse aspect of astrology itself which I had not hitherto considered, probably because I had never considered astrology at all until this morning: when, thumbing through the chaos of the *Radio Times* in search of something else, I inadvertently fetched up against the face of Patric Walker, topping his horoscope column with the knowing smirk of one for whom fate holds no surprises. So I glanced at the Cancer entry, hoping for some such encouragement as "keep trying, you will find the programme information you are seeking any day now, this week's layout was done by a tall dark stranger who has now gone on a long sea voyage," but instead received only the advice adumbrated above. And I would have left it that, had it not

suddenly struck me that Patric's counsel, though apparently offered to me alone, had in fact been offered to that entire twelfth of the population born between June 22 and July 23. This week, five million people were going to confront their fears, face situations head-on, and ignore the pleas of others.

It did not bear thinking about. All those hapless phobics suddenly attempting to pick up spiders, climb the Monument, travel by tube, stroke a Rottweil, cross a bridge, never mind the mass of the less manically fearful now doing everything from bursting in on their solicitor to see whether he'd been burgled lately to jamming Yelisa's switchboard with stammered enquiries about which way he thought Kazakhstan's ICBMs might be pointing because for those wishing to confront them, there is never any shortage of fears.

Nor any of situations waiting to be faced head-on: all those suddenly reeling bank-managers, all those peremptorily sacked lovers, all those summarily thumped meter-attendants! And all this while the nation's misfortunates find their chance of succour cut by a twelfth: for it is no use, this week, expecting a Cancerian Browne to help you across the road, or a Cancerian fireman to tug your car's head from the garden railing. Worse yet, consider the clash when two crab-people meet: simultaneously confronting his worst fears and facing a situation

head-on, one such rushes to his dentist, only to have the dentist shriek "Clear off, I am not helping anybody this week, as soon as I have conquered my aerophobia, I am facing a situation head-on, I am leaving my wife and flying off to Acapulco with my bunko bank-manager".

And that, of course, is only the Cancerians. If Patric is to be believed, five million Tauruses are about to issue ultimatums to as many unreasonable employers, and five million freight Librans are poised to concentrate on an affair of the heart. Should they, furthermore, tell these to any of the five million poor saps born between December 22 and January 20, we can expect real trouble, because for them, as you may have heard, the Sun and Mercury in Aquarius are at odds with Pluto in Scorpio, leading Patric not unreasonably to conclude that minor differences of opinion could well turn into major conflicts. Put another way, if tomorrow's Spurs v West Ham game attracts its likely attendance, anything up to ten thousand Sagittarians and Capricornians may be confidently expected to end up knocking seven bells out of one another.

Not that this is any skin off my nose. Thanks to Pluto's adverse aspect, I am allowed not to give a fig for anyone else. So, just in case you're one of the five million Aquarians currently seeking help with intense personal problems, at least you know where not to come.

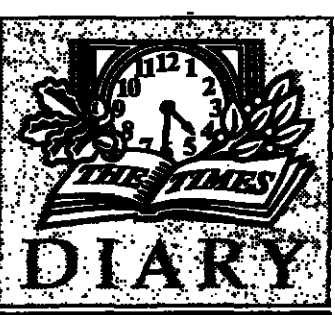
A past and present help

THE Vatican is considering the creation of a patron saint for AIDS sufferers. Jesuits in Britain are leading the call for St Aloysius Gonzaga to be officially designated as the protector of AIDS victims. St Aloysius, a Jesuit who died in Rome in 1591 at the age of 23, contracted the bubonic plague after carrying victims of the disease on his shoulders to a Jesuit hospital.

The pope has not yet pronounced on the matter, but the proposal has already divided Catholic opinion. The Rev Michael Campbell-Johnston, superior-general of the Jesuits in Britain, admits that the suggestion has caused division.

"AIDS is a serious disease and people who suffer from it need help," he says. "I think it is a very good idea. Aloysius personified piety, self-sacrifice and non-violence. His sanctity is outstanding. He would be a spiritual inspiration." Fr Johannes Gerhart, who is secretary of the Jesuit Order of Rome, also backs the idea. "We have patron saints for every kind of group, so why not for those people with AIDS?" But Fr Gualberto Giacchi, who has written the Vatican biography of the saint, disagrees. "This would end up overshadowing some of the historical values in the life of this saint — the more universal values," he says.

The issue will be decided by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments in Rome, which, under the pope's direction, is responsible for naming patron saints. "If enough people with AIDS ask for St Aloysius as a patron saint, it may happen," says a Vatican spokesman.



Albert Reynolds may have lots of front when it comes to singing country & western songs in public, but ask him his age and he turns all coy. His daughter Leonie — as well as his parliamentary secretary, the Fianna Fail press officer and several reference books — have, until now, all suggested that Ireland's new leader was born on November 3, 1935. The party's press office insists that its information comes direct from the Taoiseach's own mouth. Reynolds's birth certificate was last night published in Dublin's evening press. There it is in black and white: November 3, 1933. Who ever said seven days was a long time in politics?

Return to sender

LORD SHAWCROSS was last night presented with a unique gift to mark his 90th birthday: a leather-bound volume of some of his letters published in *The Times*. The gift was presented to Shawcross, one of our most prolific correspondents, at a 200-strong banquet, attended by, among others, Lord Callaghan and Sir Geoffrey Howe. The meal was held in the premises of his employers — for whom he still puts in an eight-hour day — J.P. Morgan. The letters reflect the applica-

tion of a powerful mind and acerbic wit to a wide range of issues, from the continued prosecution of Nazi war criminals ("I am against it") to the wisdom of BBC producers ("there seems to be no reliable evidence that they possess any hot line to the deity"). Shawcross says that he has no intention of retiring from the bank. Nor from the page opposite, please.

Dickens and son?

AFTER Paddy Ashdown, Charles Dickens. The annual dinner of the Dickens Fellowship at Simpsons in the Strand tonight will hear readings from *The Confessions of Charles Dickens*, in which the author owns up to an affair with the actress Ellen Ternan.

Alan Watts, the fellowship's respected president and Dickens scholar, has ghost-written the memoirs, recently published in

Lords and ladies

RACHAEL HEYHOE FLINT, the former captain of England's women cricket team who was re-buffed in her attempts to join the MCC last year, believes she has detected a chink in the club's solidly male armour. She has just written to Michael Melluish, the MCC's president, to congratulate him on a three-page feature about women's cricket in the club's current yearbook. The first time it has carried an article on women.

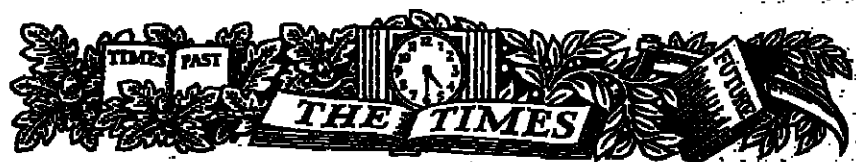
"Do I detect a softening of attitudes towards women who have a great interest in cricket?" she asks. As the article records the first ever women's cricket match in 1745 — 42 years before the MCC was established — she may have a strong case. MCC secretary, Colonel John Stephenson, also held out some encouragement yesterday. "This does not herald the arrival of ladies, but the question should be raised again. The MCC really isn't an old fuddy-duddy club."

The tabloids are leaving no stone unturned in their pursuit of the Paddy Ashdown story. A team of journalists even set up camp yesterday outside the Telford hotel of Alison Northcliffe, Ashdown's secretary between 1986 and 1990. Northcliffe had to telephone her local Lib Dem party in Torquay to find out why she had suddenly become the centre of such attention. What the reporters did not realise until they arrived, however, was that she was on her honeymoon.

Great Expectations...



America, and describes them as "a very factual fiction". He is supported by Claire Tomalin, whose biography of Terman concludes she was his "lover and mistress". Peter Ackroyd, however, concludes in his monumental biography that it was "inconceivable



THE RIGHT TO RENT

Not until last December did the government start to panic about the property market. House prices had been falling, in the South-East at least, since 1988. Only when former Conservative voters began to tell heartbreaking stories about losing jobs, houses, cars and all they stood up in, did ministers realise that the severely depressed housing market was becoming an electoral issue. Mortgage lenders' heads were banged together to produce a repossessions rescue plan and an eight-month stamp duty holiday was announced.

A Times survey today indicates that the rescue scheme may help as few as 5,000 out of a total of 80,000 facing repossession. And while the stamp duty holiday may lead to a cluster of sales before its expiry date in August, few experts believe that the 1 per cent saving will be enough to tempt a mass of buyers into the stagnant market. A larger fall in house prices has not managed to do so.

Does it really matter if house prices continue to fall? Politically, the property market crash could damage the Conservatives. The loss of the "feel-good factor" created by high house prices is continuing to hold back recovery in the economy. The impact has been most painful in Tory areas, hurting those lower middle-class voters who were important to Margaret Thatcher's electoral success. Attracted by her dream of a property-owning democracy, they bought houses (often from their council) whose value has now fallen, the interest payments on which many can no longer afford. Because the market is so sluggish, they find themselves unable to sell. And some of those who bought at the top of the boom now find their house is worth less than their mortgage.

For the economy, in the longer term, lower house prices are excellent. Britain's housing market, crucial to "labour market flexibility", has long been blighted by the inflexibility of home ownership. It is as illiquid as molasses. At the height of the boom in the 1980s, skilled workers could not move down south to fill shortages because they could not afford to live there. Now, they would be lucky to be able to sell at all.

Young people get sucked into home

ownership far earlier than they should. In Germany, the average age for taking out a first mortgage is 35. Until then, Germans live in rented apartments and can move from city to city as the market takes them. Young Britons, by contrast, take out their first mortgage in their mid-twenties. They are saddled with debt and stuck in one place.

At their peak, in 1990, interest payments on the typical new mortgage took up 32 per cent of average earnings. In the 1980s, Britons were relatively happy to be encumbered with large mortgages as soon as they were old enough to afford them. They feared that, if they failed to climb onto the housing ladder, they would have to make do with a lower rung later. Panie buying-set in. The more people bought, the higher prices rose, and the more imperative it became for anybody who could afford it to buy a house. Those who did were rewarded by a giddy increase in their (notional) wealth.

That unseemly rush into the property market prepared the ground for today's recession. Interest rates rose and duly punished industry and employment. It should be a government imperative to stop that boom/bust cycle.

House prices have still fallen less in real terms than they did in the mid-1970s (although then high inflation masked the effect). Those who have been caught by the collapse this time may hesitate before entering the market again. But while home ownership remains so heavily subsidised, Britons will continue to scrape together all their savings and lock them into their homes.

Politicians assume that there are still as many votes in increasing home ownership as there were in the 1980s. Yet the new homeowners who have discovered, painfully, that property investment is not a one-way bet, might now vote for a policy that put money into reviving the rented sector instead. The one-third of the population that already rents would welcome such a shift in subsidy too. No longer should mortgage interest tax relief be seen by government and Opposition as the political sacred cow that can never be killed for its meat.

CASE FOR THE PROSECUTION

The least good reason to welcome yesterday's appointment of Barbara Mills as Director of Public Prosecutions is that she is a woman. Her sex will doubtless please ministers hypersensitive to charges of male chauvinism. Career-minded women will be delighted at this confirmation that they are not disqualified from high office. But the choice owes nothing to such considerations. Mrs Mills is simply the best person for the job.

The Crown Prosecution Service thought that it already had the best on the sad day last October when Sir Allan Green, Mrs Mills's predecessor, was driven to resign. The best had not yet proved enough. The service was created in 1986 and the years since have not been easy. It has been beset by the usual problems that attend institutional reform: administrative confusion, stretched resources, poor employee morale and an excessive workload for senior management. Worse, the service has been haunted by the problem that began it.

The CPS came into being because of dissatisfaction with the role of the police. Before 1986, the police were both the investigating and the prosecuting authority. That authority inevitably saw its job as to clear up crime and convict its perpetrators. The methods by which this was achieved mattered less. Too often, the prosecution presented evidence that it knew, or should have known, to be faulty. Juries were browbeaten to convict. The creation of the CPS was meant to remove this compulsion.

It has since emerged that the compulsion was sometimes worse than could have been imagined. The Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six and the murder of PC Keith Blakelock have all cast doubt on police

procedures. This has rubbed off on the prosecutors who pressed their cases. Sir Allan showed a commendable willingness to abandon doubtful convictions. But he paid a price. Police suspicion of the CPS is rife. Working relations, essential to the system's smooth running, have sometimes hovered on the point of breakdown.

Here lies particular reason to welcome Mrs Mills's appointment. In her 18 months at the Serious Fraud Office, she proved adroit at working alongside the police on complex investigations. She is no soft touch. Indeed critics of her tenure at the SFO more often accuse her of an over-readiness to prosecute than the reverse. Yet as counsel for Winston Silcott, she has first-hand knowledge of the hazards.

Her first task is to restore the morale of the Crown Prosecution Service. She must press the case, first espoused by Sir Allan, for her staff to be granted rights of audience in the Crown courts, breaking the monopoly of the Bar. Secondly, she must open up CPS decision-making. There may be a reason why the Crown seeks to jail doctors who put terminally ill patients out of their agony, or distraught women who fight back against their violent husbands, or men who choose to get their sexual kicks by submitting to mutilation by others. If so, the public should be told.

The criminal justice system is being investigated by Lord Runciman's Royal Commission. The right verdict for it to return on the charges of inadequacy against the CPS would be the Scottish one: "not proven". Mrs Mills's ambition should be to ensure that, by the time he reports, Lord Runciman returns a "not guilty" verdict instead.

FAULTY TOWERS

Demolition only 21 years after it was completed brings to an end an appropriately nasty, brutish and short life for one of London's least loved modern buildings, the departments of environment and transport in Marsham Street, Westminster. Michael Heseltine announced yesterday that he is to spend something like £200 million replacing the block. This is cheap at the price. Almost any replacement would be better than the slabs sticking three fat fingers 200 feet at the sky from the surrounding close-knit streets.

The paradox that has pacified the Treasury is that the replacement will be more cost-effective than this utilitarian "statement" of the Modern Movement in architecture. The environment department, supposedly guardian of Britain's finest architecture, was an exceptionally inefficient place to work in: eternally windswept, already falling to bits, dispiriting and badly interconnected, with the lifts that were its main arteries continually breaking down. Some 3,500 civil servants were herded into a repetitious grid of concrete boxes and identical corridors. A former environment secretary used to take visitors to the 19th storey to point out for them the best view of London — the only one which did not include the Marsham Street towers.

"Marsham Street" was erected in fits and starts throughout the Sixties, representing a variant on Modernism proudly labelled Brutalism by its progenitors. Other examples include the Hayward Gallery/Queen Elizabeth Hall complex on the South Bank and the Elephant and Castle in south London. If it is now open season to call in Benjamin's famous friendly bombs on such debased commercial and bureaucratic architecture, there are plenty more candidates for attack. Most date from the disastrous policy of

"point block" development in the 1960s and 1970s. Birmingham's Bull Ring is coming down. So should Manchester's Piccadilly development. In London, most offence was caused by isolated steel, glass and concrete blocks round the parks of the West End: the Hilton and Royal Lancaster hotels, the Euston tower near Regent's Park and the Royal Free Hospital by Hampstead Heath. New Zealand House lowers over St James's and Centre Point over Soho. Many of these buildings were built for the government, or subsidised with public-sector grants or "planning gain" deals. The passion for high-rise building, always inefficient in the use of space, was largely the result of delusions of grandeur by developers and civil servants.

Urban space can be more efficiently, more sensitively and more attractively exploited by intensive, low building. This lesson has been an expensive one. London is not the city for monumental redevelopment, like Paris and the centre of Washington. Its character is higgledy-piggledy, with medieval street plans, gardens and congeries of old villages. Its architecture needs to respect the surroundings and the needs of those who are going to use it.

Downstream, redevelopment is hoped to shift the centre of gravity of London. The great pyramid-topped tower of Canary Wharf can be seen from all quarters, and as far away as Stansted. It is too big, possibly too big for its own commercial good, but at least few will ever see it from close to. Its day for demolition may be far off, but from a river boat, up the old gateway to London, much of the new building in Docklands is exciting and respects its setting. The Age of Brutalism is dead. It meets its end symbolically in the fall of the faulty towers of Marsham Street.

Party lines on BBC funding

From Lord Briggs and others

Sir, With the approach of a general election, we regard it as vital for the leaders of the three main parties to make clear their attitudes to the funding of the BBC. The BBC's charter is up for renewal in 1996: it is therefore the Parliament that is about to be elected that will almost certainly decide this issue.

For most of its history, the BBC has been seen as a part of the social fabric of Britain. In fulfilling its brief to educate, inform and entertain, the BBC has performed a wide range of valuable services to the nation. It has encouraged talented writers, actors, musicians and all those involved in the craft of film-making. Its education programmes have helped to shape the outlook of generations of young people. It has provided independent observation of the life of the nation and the world.

All around the world, the BBC is synonymous with high-quality programmes and first-class production values.

Today the BBC is in retreat. The preoccupation with cutbacks and the market economy has made a publicly funded body unfashionable. The consequent retrenchment is involving wholesale cuts in programme budgets and in the BBC's regional service. The range and diversity of the BBC's output is at serious risk.

Few large organisations are perfect, and some of the efficiencies being put into practice will give the viewer better value for money. But now is the time to stop the cuts and to start supporting a valuable national asset.

We believe that a future government which cares about education, diversity and the maintenance of our national culture will want to re-inforce and invest in the BBC.

We therefore urge the three party leaders to make a commitment to the future of the BBC, and to state in their election manifestos that they will continue to support the licence fee and allow it to rise at least in line with inflation.

Yours etc,
ASA BRIGGS,
BRENDAN FOSTER,
GEORGE HARRISON,
RICHARD HOGGART,
TERRY JONES,
CAMERON MACKINTOSH,
IRIS MURDOCH,
MICHAEL PALIN,
DAVID PLOWRIGHT,
ANTHONY SAMPSON,
ROY STRONG.

The Campaign for Quality Television
PO Box 321,
Manchester M60 3AA,
February 5.

On the right rails

From Mr J. D. A. Evans

Sir, Mr Wint of the British Road Federation says (letter, January 31) that he understands that 90 per cent of the population never travel on a train. Our understanding based on independent market research, is that just under half the population use the railways at some time.

It is not surprising that we find his assessment of the railway industry's needs and achievements to be similarly wide of the mark.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY EVANS
(Director of Public Affairs),
British Railways Board,
Euston House, 24 Eversholt Street,
PO Box 100, NW1,
January 31.

Church 'superiority'

From the Bishop of Brentwood

Sir, I read with interest the article by Derek Jennings (January 27) concerning the "effortless superiority" of the Anglican Church towards other Christian churches. There is some truth in this.

However, as Roman Catholics we need to examine our own conscience. For centuries, and even on occasions since Vatican II, we have implied, if not expressed, an "ecclesiastical superiority" towards other churches, which must often have made them feel like second-class citizens.

Sadly, some may be inclined to see the recent Vatican response to the first Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, wrongly or rightly, as a further sign of this.

Yours faithfully,
THOMAS McMAHON,
Bishop of Brentwood,
Ingatstone, Essex,
January 31.

The right to die

From Mr Ludovic Kennedy

Sir, I see that Bernard Levin has been writing tosh again about euthanasia ("Whose death is it anyway?", February 3): contemptible tosh, too.

Derek Humphry's wife, Jean, having watched her mother take five years to die in agony from cancer, developed the disease herself at 40. It spread rapidly to her bones, liver, kidneys. Her pain was not wholly alleviated by analgesics and not wanting to die as her mother had done, she begged her husband to obtain some powerful drug that she could take when she could bear her condition no longer. He did this with the help of a Harley Street friend, and on Easter Saturday, 1975, she took it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Unpaid bills and legal drawbacks

From the Under Secretary of State for Employment

Sir, I can well understand the frustration expressed by Mr Alistair Sampson (letter, February 5) about the delayed payment of bills and the damage that this causes to small firms.

Though the arguments for legislation imposing statutory interest on overdue bills may appear cogent and powerful, there is little evidence that a legislative approach would work in practice. Most organisations representing small firms recognise the practical difficulties in framing an effective law and share the government's view that its impact would be, at best, minimal and that it could actually damage the small firms sector. Indeed, only on Tuesday, the Credit Protection Association warned of the dangers of trying to impose statutory interest on overdue bills.

The answer to delayed payment is for industry to change its own payment practices and I can reassure Mr Sampson that the government is actively encouraging this process. For example, this department has recently published a detailed guide to prompt payment, "Making the Cash Flow", and I have sought the personal commitment of the chairmen of Britain's top 100 companies to the principle of prompt payment.

I also recognise that the public sector should set an example and a survey of the payment record of government departments is presently being undertaken.

The eradication of late payment requires a fundamental change in business culture and neither the government, nor many other organisations, believe legislation would achieve that change.

Yours faithfully,
ERIC FORTH,
Department of Employment,
Caxton House,
Tothill Street, SW1,
February 5.

From Mr Nicholas Goulding

Sir, Mr Sampson rightly draws attention to the need for a legislative solution to late payment of commercial debt which is driving so many companies to the wall and acting as a drag on the whole economy.

The government, together with the CBI, is still wedded to voluntary codes as the solution, despite the fact that such codes have failed to make any impact in the past. Without legal sanction such codes will be observed by those who already honour their commitments and abused by those who do not.

Sunday trading

From the Chairman of OPEN

Sir, Councillor David Weeks, proposes that the rateable values of shops which open on Sundays should be increased to reflect their opportunities for profit (report, January 27). It is not clear from your report whether his proposal would apply only to stores which cannot open on Sundays, but would like to do so, or would embrace small convenience stores which are already entitled to open on Sundays for the sale of most of their goods.

My organisation represents 10,000 small local food shops and convenience stores. They have already suffered from the recession, high interest rates, the decline of the small store sector, the uniform business rate and now from the competition on Sundays from the supermarkets. Increased rates could be the final straw for our sector which has already seen the number of small stores decline from around 145,000 40 years ago to 38,000 today.

Higher rates would be catastrophic for us, for the 50,000 people whom we employ and for the millions of people, especially working mothers, the elderly, the disabled and those without transport who

depend upon our stores. If Councillor Weeks's plan is being considered by ministers, I trust that they will spare a thought for us.

Why should we pay for the sins of those supermarkets which seek to squeeze extra profits at the expense of the neighbourhood shop?

Yours faithfully,
MORTON MIDDLEDITCH,
Chairman,
OPEN (Outlets Providing for Everyday Needs),
67-69 Whitfield Street, W1,
January 30.

From Councillor David Weeks
Sir, The letter from Mr Terry Clemens (January 30) raises undue concern about the potential impact of my proposal on small businesses. The beauty of a supplemental Sunday business rate is that it can be graded according to the size of the retailer. Large companies who open on Sundays place a far higher demand on council services than corner stores. A progressive rate would reflect this.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID WEEKS,
PO Box 240,
Westminster City Hall,
64 Victoria Street, SW1,
February 5.

Business letters, page 23

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Yours faithfully,
DAVID WEEKS,
PO Box 240,
Westminster City Hall,
64 Victoria Street, SW1,
February 5.

Most of these shows, including mine, have been in the pipeline for or tour in America for several months if not years: most seem to be a response either to the notion that a certain songwriter has been unjustly neglected, or that anthologies are more affordable than vastly expensive new musicals which could crash, as did half a dozen last year alone.

It does a disservice to all composer shows to attack them simply because they have accidentally arrived in a group. You might as well object on the same principle to No 9 buses, but they do still have their individual uses.

Yours sincerely,
SHERIDAN MORLEY,
Chelsea Harbour, SW10.

Safety in numbers?

From Mr Sheridan Morley

Sir, Benedict Nightingale's review of *The Cotton Club* (January 31) raises a general objection to the number of nostalgic "songbook" shows currently on offer around London theatres, and as the reviewer/narrator of the one about Vivian Ellis at Islington's King's Head, (to which he was generous) I clearly have an axe to grind.

But to object to the proliferation of the genre seems to me as random as to complain about there being too much Shakespeare around, or not enough Expressionist German drama. "Fads" and "trends" don't sell tickets, and nobody starts out to do what anybody else is doing.

It was a traumatic moment for both: they had been happily married for many years and she had borne him three sons. Mr Levin says that he finds Mr Humphry's account of their tender farewells to each other "sickening"; not nearly as sickening as I find Mr Levin's denigration of it. It was this event that determined the course of the rest of Mr Humphry's life, the founding of the Hemlock Society in California, his presidency of the World Right to Die Federation, and most recently publication of *Final Exit*.

Although Mr Levin, like me, is now senile, that is no excuse for his saying that this book is banned in

this country when it is freely available at £12.95 (the Attorney General having realised the futility of banning a book in England which is not banned in Scotland).

Mr Levin does not seem to have asked himself why the book has been such a success in the United States or why branches of the World Right to Die Federation now exist in more than 40 countries. It is because more and more people dread the prospect of a life artificially and miserably prolonged by medical science beyond its natural term, and seek some means of ending it. At present this is denied them.

Yours etc,
LUDOVIC KENNEDY,
Ashdown, Avebury,
Wiltshire,
February 3.

Tricia Howard's right to privacy

From Mr Des Wilson

Sir, I believe that you were inadvertently harsh when you stated of Ms Tricia Howard, in your leading article today, that "the right to privacy of the lady in the case, which at first was surely close to total, was also surrendered by her when she summoned reporters and photographers" for a photocall.

The fact is that Ms Howard has been hounded for days. Her family and friends were being harassed. And it was even more likely to be the case that her life would be made a greater misery from now on until the tabloids had drained every bit of blood from the story.

She reluctantly took the view, having taken her lawyer's advice, and also our advice, that it would be best — to put it bluntly — to let the dogs have their day.

"Surrendering" her privacy was done with the utmost reluctance, but I believe was as sensible a course as it was courageous.

Incidentally, Ms Howard has turned down considerable sums of money and acted with remarkable integrity and that, too, should be a matter of record.

Yours,
DES WILSON
(General election campaign director),
Liberal Democrats,
4 Cowley Street, SW1,
February 6.

Fixed fees for lawyers

From Mr Lloyd M. Groves

Sir, "Fixed fees" for lawyers, which really mean "smaller fees", may well find favour with the public and politicians alike, but I urge your readers to stop and think carefully before joining in the hue and cry.

The Lord Chancellor is suggesting that no matter how long or complex a case in a magistrates' court conducted under legal aid, the fee should nearly always be a fixed one. No reward shall be given irrespective of the length of time such a case may take, no matter how demanding a case may be and ignoring any special effort given when it is needed.

Magistrates courts are places not only for robbers and villains but the likes of us all, who perhaps due to misfortune, mistake or error of judgment can so easily find ourselves in the dock. If it is you, Mr or Mrs Average, before the court I urge you to ask yourself how you would feel if dealt with, at a time when, most vulnerable, by a lawyer who could only give you a limited time within the scope of the fixed fee to be allowed.

It may sound trite but every case that comes before the courts is different. To ascertain those differences much care and attention must be given. Criminal legal-aid work is demanding, stressful and often carried out at unsociable hours. If the work is not done properly because the fees are inadequate, we shall have more Birmingham sixes, Guildford fours and Tottenham threes. What then the cost? The price is our liberty.

Yours faithfully,
LLOYD GROVES,
West London Law Society,
37 Harley Street, W1,
February 4.

Patient's charter

From Ms Jane Lee

Sir, If the patient's charter is to be an example of the government's pledge to improve standards of service, it is vital that users of the National Health Service are aware of the exact wording in each assurance. I would like to give just two examples:

1. The right to be "referred to a second opinion if you and your GP agree this is desirable". Fund-holding GPs work to a tight budget and, no matter how willing, may be unable to meet the cost of further consultation fees. Under such circumstances, perhaps the only "right" for the patient is to change GP.

2. The right to "have access to your health records". Yes, but only those which were written since last November and those which would not cause "undue concern to the patient". The added, again unmentioned, condition is that each health authority has the right to charge up to £10 for such access.

Rather than spend nearly £2 million on a somewhat meaningless patient's charter, the government should have invested this much-needed money in health services.

Yours sincerely,
JANE LEE (Co-ordinator),
Hospital Alert,
51 Grove Road,
Hounslow, Middlesex,
January 28.

Favoured occupations

From Mr W. J. Schaffer

Sir, I was interested to read that train drivers are no longer held in esteem by the public (report, February 5), as my own profession has met with a similar fate in recent years. But which occupations are so honoured?

Yours faithfully,
W. J. SCHAFFER
(Chartered architect),
56 Belvedere Road,
Ashton-in-Makerfield,
Wigan, Greater Manchester,
February 5.

TODAY IN BUSINESS

BULL BY HORNS

Bull

IBM's \$110 million investment in Bull, the French state-owned computer group, shatters European dreams of an indigenous electronics industry
Page 23

IN REVERSE

Price cutting and discount deals failed to prevent car sales in January slumping to the lowest level recorded since 1982
Page 20

TAKING FLIGHT

John Olsen is spreading his wings, leaving Cathay Pacific to join Dan-Air as chief executive at a critical time for the British airline
Page 21

TOMORROW

PROFILE

Robin Biggam, the chief executive of BICC, is ambitious, but he puts his family first. Carol Leonard discovers

SAFETY NET

The investor protection system is being radically overhauled but firms may continue to slip through the net

THE POUND

US dollar
1.875 (+0.0070)
German mark
2.8702 (-0.0013)
Exchange index
91.2 (+0.1)
Bank of England official
close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share
1961.2 (-9.7)
FT-SE 100
2534.3 (-12.8)
New York Dow Jones
3261.63 (+4.03)
Tokyo Nikkei Avg
22104.92 (+168.55)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base 10 1/2%
3-month interbank 10 1/4-10 1/2%
3-month eligible bills 10 1/4-10 1/2%
US: Prime Rate 6 1/2%
Federal Funds 4 1/4%
3-month Treasury Bills 3.82-3.80%
30-year bonds 10 1/2-10 3/4%

CURRENCIES

London: New York
£/\$ 1.8755
£/DM 2.8702
£/Sfr 1.4950
£/FFr 16.6667
£/Yen 160.36
ECU 1.3363
£/Aust 13.7603
£/Scd 13.7603

GOLD

London: Fixing
AM \$355.25
close \$354.55-355.45 (\$195.50-196.00)
New York: Comex \$355.05-355.55

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Feb) \$18.55 bbl (\$18.05)

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 135.7 December (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading price

Dash for gas yields seventh contract

GEC Alsthom wins £580m PowerGen deal

BY ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

GEC Alsthom has won a £580 million contract to build a 1,360 megawatt gas-fired power station for PowerGen, Britain's second-largest fossil fuel generating company, to be sited at Connah's Quay, North Wales.

The gas power station order is the seventh secured in Britain by the Anglo-French manufacturer since the start of last year, when the newly privatised generating industry embarked on a "dash for gas" to replace older coal-fired power stations.

PowerGen's decision to proceed with Connah's Quay highlights the scale of power station building in Britain, and the role of technology based upon aero-engines to harness gas as a fuel.

The orders secured by GEC Alsthom alone will provide generating capacity amounting to more than 5,000 megawatts, almost a tenth of the total capacity in England and Wales. Siemens, of Germany, and Asea Brown Boveri, the Swedish-Swiss

group, have also won orders to build gas-fired plants in the UK.

GEC Alsthom, a 50-50 joint venture between Lord Weinstock's General Electric Company and Alcatel Alsthom, of France, is now the front-runner in the United Kingdom market for new power stations. Its UK orders for gas-fired plants total £1.6 billion. Kelvin Bray, the chairman of GEC Alsthom's subsidiary European Gas Turbines, said talks over further orders were continuing.

The wholesale renewal of a large chunk of baseload generating capacity comes at a time when Britain's two biggest privatised generating groups, National Power and PowerGen, are already under attack for steep price increases.

Critics say it would be cheaper to keep old coal plants running even though they are much less efficient at converting heat into electricity. The generators say replacing part of Britain's capacity with gas turbines will enable emissions to be reduced while

building only a minimum of immensely expensive desulphurisation equipment onto existing coal-fired plants.

Since its privatisation, PowerGen has announced the closure of four coal plants, with a combined capacity of nearly 1,000 megawatts. By 1995, when Connah's Quay comes on stream, the company will have added almost 3,000 megawatts of gas plant.

Connah's Quay will be built on the site of a coal power station which closed in 1982. PowerGen's first gas-fired plant, at Killingholme, south Humberside, will come on stream later this year. A second, at Rye House, Hertfordshire, is planned to begin generating in 1994. Both will use Siemens technology.

But rising gas prices have given an added advantage to GEC Alsthom. Since 1984, Alsthom has been working with General Electric of America to develop an engine, used to power Boeing 747 aircraft, for power generation. The resulting turbine, the 9F, has an energy conversion efficiency of 54 per cent, more than 2 per cent ahead of any rival, according to Mr Bray.

The turbines to be installed in Britain will be part-manufactured by GE in South Carolina and completed at GEC Alsthom's Belfort plant in eastern France. Steam turbines and generators will be manufactured at Rugby, Warwickshire, and Stafford.

Overall, 55 per cent of the work will be carried out in the UK and up to 1,000 people will be employed building Connah's Quay.

Because of the growth in demand, GEC Alsthom is investing £100 million to enable the Belfort plant to build the whole turbine from 1995 onwards, and to increase capacity in response to growing demand for power generation gas turbines from continental Europe and the Pacific rim.

Comment, page 23

Price rise pledge, page 21

Receivers put in at Forwell Group

BY NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

LLOYDS Bank has appointed receivers to Forwell Group, an office design and fitting business in Middlesbrough, after the company's failure to repay debts of £1.4 million.

Timothy Harris and Christopher Hughes from Cork Gully, the insolvency specialists, were appointed on Tuesday evening, although the news was reported to the stock exchange only yesterday.

The bank admitted that it had been guilty of "unprofessional behaviour" in writing to some of Forwell's staff telling them that the company was bankrupt even though it was still trying to negotiate a rescue package.

One employee was told that her overdraft was frozen until she contacted the branch about her employment situation. A Lloyds spokeswoman said the bank had apologised to the company and the staff about the letters.

Forwell owns properties worth more than £1.5 million, which means that Lloyds' loans are likely to be repaid in full. The group's unsecured creditors, however, will receive little or nothing. The shares, suspended at 3p, are thought to be worthless.

Until last week, Michael Wheller, Forwell's chairman, and the South Yorkshire Pension Fund, a 16 per cent shareholder, were trying to rescue the company, and hoping to appoint Postern Executive Group, a firm of company doctors.

A letter from Postern to the company last month said that it believed there was a viable core business that could be saved. Forwell lost £1.1 million in 1990 but is thought to have broken even last year despite the recession.

The receivers hope to sell Ferndale Contracts, one of Forwell's main subsidiaries, to a management buyout team. The rest of the group, which had 45 employees, is likely to be wound up.

A Lloyds spokesman said: "A banking relationship relies on an active dialogue and accurate information. Unfortunately, that is not always forthcoming. We have been working with Forwell for a long time to try to find a solution to their problems. Regrettably, there wasn't one."

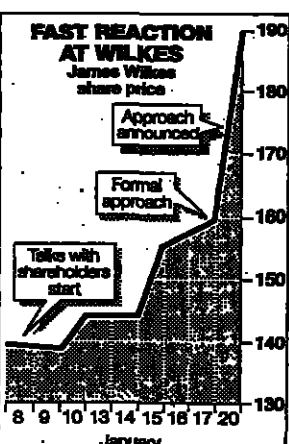
Advisers rebuked by panel

BY MARTIN WALLER

THREE financial advisers have been rebuked by the City's takeover panel for their actions in the £36.6 million hostile takeover bid by Petrocon, the engineering and surveying business, for James Wilkes, another engineer.

The bid was announced on Monday, but it is the events leading up to the news that have attracted the panel's concern. In particular a 26 per cent rise in the Wilkes share price to 189p while behind-the-scenes negotiations were going on.

Henry Cooke Lumsden, the Manchester broker, bought a parcel of Wilkes shares on behalf of Petrocon on January 10, when the price was 140p. Between January 8 and 16, Cooke's corporate finance side, in conjunction with Smith New Court Corporate Finance, secretly sounded out a total of 14 institutional shareholders, far



more than normal, to see if they would support a bid. By the end of that period the share price was 10 per cent higher, and the panel has ruled that both banks were in breach of the City code of not consulting with it when they started to widen the discussions and again by not consulting when the

share price began to move. Cooke had no comment, but Smith New Court blamed an excess of enthusiasm: it appears each contacted shareholder while unaware the other was doing so. The Stock Exchange's insider dealing unit is investigating the affair, but the panel does not believe there were any untoward transactions.

Once informal bid talks between the two companies had broken down, Rothschilds, adviser to Wilkes, should have put out a formal announcement on January 20, before a further rise in the bid price. The panel held the bank primarily responsible for a breach of the code but did not make a direct criticism of the bank's behaviour.

Rothschilds says the delay in putting out the announcement was caused by difficulties in getting ratification from the Wilkes board.

Comment, page 23

Trying to find the designer ecu

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN socialist MEPs have upped the stakes in the battle to produce the Eurocurrency of the future by offering a week-long visit to Strasbourg to anyone who can design a fitting pattern for an ecu note or coin. Sceptics at the ecu competition launch suggested the second prize might be two weeks.

Jean-Pierre Cot, the socialist group president, wasn't deterred, however, saying: "The desire for an ecu is being carried by a tide of popular opinion."

M Cot produced an array of figures to back up the emotional cry for one continent, one currency. He also detailed a theoretical journey in which £100 became £44 just through today's routine currency exchanges across nine EC borders. The socialists promise that, as well as free trips to the Euro-altar in Strasbourg, the winning overall design will be minted as a coin "in a limited run".

There are three categories for those wishing to enter the competition — under-11s, over-11s and professional graphic designers.

M Cot conceded that despite the desire for a single currency, the very word "ecu" is controversial. In Germany, it is virtually unpronounceable; in Belgium, its principal connotation is as a 28 per cent proof beer. M Cot produced the first designs for the competition, produced by "Nathalie", a Strasbourg student. Nathalie's notes consist of rather busy European maps, splodges of colour and a wilting flower, the Europa, which, perhaps prophetically, died out in the sixteenth century.

In the commission, meanwhile, the debate rages as to what to call one hundredth of an ecu. The Latin term "as", used for small coins in Roman times, has been suggested but faces ridicule from Anglophones. All national denominations — pence, cents, pen-

nies and the like — have been ruled out. The commission estimates that 68 billion ecu coins will be needed to float the new currency. This would assume 200 coins for each of the Community's 340 million inhabitants.

The socialist competition is vying with a similar challenge launched in France, and sponsored by the French government to the tune of 500,000 of those old-fashioned things called francs. Pierre Bérégovoy, the French finance minister, has questioned the need for any royalty to appear on ecus, but Britain was given the wink at Maas-tricht that the Queen could appear on one side of the new currency.

M Cot admitted that all currency names would be welcomed in his competition, even conceding that something called the pound would be considered for Euro-dominance. "I don't think it would get very far, though," he said.



Seated on the board: Ann Burdus brings her international experience to the board as a non-executive director

BAe cuts 450 jobs but may buy Prestwick

BY OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Aerospace is to cut 450 jobs in its dynamics division. The company claimed its ability to undertake guided weapons projects would be damaged unless the government took an early decision to buy its Asraam air-to-air missile system.

The cutbacks accompanied confirmation that BAE may buy Prestwick airport, in Ayrshire, from BAA, the airport operator, in an effort to protect its 2,000 staff there.

"We are in discussions with BAA about protecting our manufacturing plant there and the operation of our flying college," BAE said.

The renewed state of job losses and doubts over the future of Prestwick airport underline the pressure on BAE to reshuffle its operations and restore City credibility after last autumn's disastrous rights issue.

BAA is developing Glasgow as Scotland's international airport in place of Prestwick. But BAE relies upon the Prestwick runway to fly out completed Jetstream 31 and 41 commuter aircraft, and for the operation of its commercial flying school.

The latest job losses in the

dynamics division, to take effect by May, are in addition to 2,400 announced last March. The cutbacks will fall hardest upon the Stevenage site, where the headcount will be reduced by 300 to 3,700. Stevenage is centre of BAE missile research and development.

At the missile manufacturing plant at Lostock, near Bolton, Lancashire, the workforce will be cut by 130 to 1,470. The workforce at the Bristol systems integration operation will also be cut, by 20, to 830.

David Laybourn, managing director of the dynamics division, said the cutbacks

were necessary to protect the future of the business. He insisted, however, that delays in purchases by the British and foreign governments were increasing the pressures on the business.

"If an early positive decision is not forthcoming on Asraam, our ability to bid for or undertake major guided weapons projects for the Ministry of Defence will be damaged," he said.

Final tenders to supply Asraam, an advanced air-to-air missile intended to replace the Sidewinder now in service with the Royal Air Force, were submitted at the end of January. BAE is bidding against BGT of Germany and a consortium comprising Matra of France and GEC, Marconi of Britain.

Alan Clark, the defence procurement minister, has promised a decision by early spring.

BAE is thought to believe that further job losses within the dynamics division will be unavoidable if the company does not receive an order by April. BAE says the missile has excellent export potential if it is bought by the Ministry of Defence.

Clark: spring decision

Dawson wears new look

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH

A BOARDROOM shake-up at Dawson International, the textile group, has led to the departure of two directors. The group, which owns the Pringle and Ballantyne brand names, is to pay six-figure compensation to Brian Faulkner and Bill Simpson.

Dawson, which appointed Nick Kuensberg as its UK chief executive in August, has reorganised the group into two main companies, Dawson Consumer Products and Dawson Premier Brands.

Ronald Miller, the group's chairman, said there would be no redundancies or reorganisation at factory level.

Ann Burdus becomes a non-executive director of Dawson. She has international experience in advertising and marketing at McCann Erickson, Interpublic Group and AGB Research. Mr Kuensberg becomes chief executive of Premier Brands, while Philip Kemp becomes chief executive consumer products.

Management of the company will be through a chairman's committee comprising Mr Miller, John Embury, finance director, Mr Kemp and Mr Kuensberg.

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Car sales fall to lowest for 10 years

BY KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

CAR sales last month fell to their lowest since 1982 in spite of price cutting and discount deals for fleet buyers.

January figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders indicated that relief for the motor industry is a long way off after a 1991 performance in which sales fell by a fifth.

The government was hoping for a slight recovery, but sales of new cars sank to 153,682, 6.02 per cent below the January 1991 total.

However, the industry said the 6 per cent drop was distorted by late registrations in the last few days of the month by manufacturers willing to do cheap deals of the sort criticised by the monopolies commission's investigation into car pricing this week.

The commission said large discounts to fleets forced manufacturers to charge private buyers more.

After 20 days of the month, the market was down 16 per cent, with Vauxhall leading Ford, traditionally Britain's largest car company, with a 21.3 per cent share of the market compared with Ford's 18.3 per cent.

However, Ford is thought to have registered about 15,000 cars in the last few days of the month to take sales to 38,502 and a market share of 25.05 per cent.

Vauxhall slipped back to a 19.94 per cent share, registering 30,643 cars, while Rover suffered worst, with its market share slipping from

15.4 per cent the previous January, to 11.95 per cent with 18,367 cars registered last month.

Vauxhall said: "A fall of just 6 per cent in January sales does not indicate in any way that the recession in the new car market is easing. The figure masked a lot of activity in the final few days of the month which seemed to involve what we can only describe as unpredictable market forces."

Sir Hal Miller, chief executive of the SMMT, said: "While the shortfall was the smallest since March, 1990, it is still the lowest January total since 1982 and down 25 per cent on January, 1990, which, in turn, was more than 6 per cent below 1989."

"This all adds up to continuing bad news for the motor industry and demonstrates that a boost for car sales is still desperately needed."

Ford has been working hard in recent weeks to clear a huge backlog of cars made in 1991 with heavy discounts.

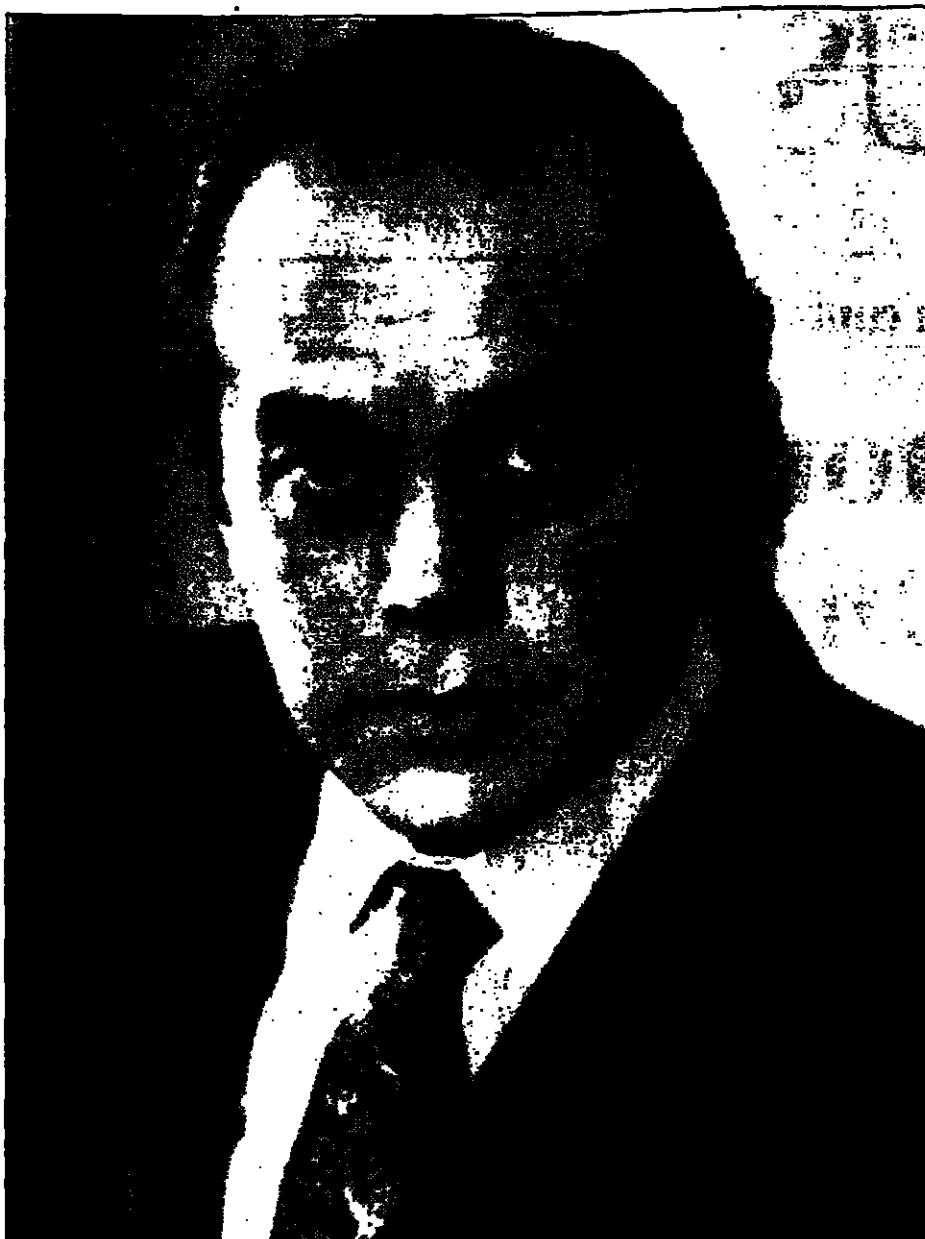
There was a good performance from Peugeot Talbot, which further increased its market share from 7.19 per cent to 8.05 per cent with 12,378 registrations.

Sales of Jaguars continued to slide, with January down from 806 in the same month of 1991 to 561, while Rolls-Royce/Bentley sales also dropped from 107 to 75 and Lotus from 187 to just 66.

Nissan, in its first month under the direct control of the Japanese manufacturer, suffered a drop in sales from 7,238 to 4,819. Audi-Volkswagen registrations also fell, as did those of Fiat, Honda, Volvo, Alfa Romeo, Mazda, Saab and Skoda, while Mercedes-Benz was about the same. There were increases for Toyota, Suzuki, Seat, Renault, Porsche and Citroën.

Mr Justice Knox did not accept that Mr Nadir might prejudice his criminal defence by giving evidence in the civil action. But he asked for undertakings from the plaintiff for Mr Nadir's protection. The judge ordered

L&T section, page 7



Court setback: Mr Nadir lost his plea for a postponement of the civil action

Nadir fails to delay civil suit

ASIL Nadir, former chairman of Polly Peck International, has failed in the High Court to postpone a £378 million civil suit while he faces a separate criminal prosecution. Christopher Morris, the Polly Peck joint administrator from Touche Ross, is suing Mr Nadir on behalf of Polly Peck to recover the sum, which is owed to creditors.

Mr Justice Knox did not accept that Mr Nadir might prejudice his criminal defence by giving evidence in the civil action. But he asked for undertakings from the plaintiff for Mr Nadir's protection. The judge ordered

that future hearings in the civil action should be heard in closed court until the case comes to trial. He said it was highly unlikely the civil case will come to trial before the criminal action.

The prosecution must not disclose any information received in evidence from Mr Nadir to third parties. But information can be passed to co-administrators, Richard Stone and Michael Jordan, who are running the commercial affairs of Polly Peck, potential witnesses and the creditors committee, on condition they observe the confidentiality rule.

The judge, on a request

from David Oliver, counsel for Polly Peck, allowed the administrators to use information from the defence to help gain control of company assets in northern Cyprus.

The court heard the administrators were still struggling to gain control of these assets. Summing up, the judge said the £378 million claim against Mr Nadir was based on alleged fraudulent breach of duty, involving 263 payments and misappropriation of property.

The court also established that Mr Nadir's legal fees were being met by a third party. Mr Nadir was made bankrupt last month.

Rent cuts put life in West End market

BY MATTHEW BOND

DRAMATIC cuts in asking rents are at last injecting some life into the depressed West End office market, according to Neil Sinclair, joint managing director of Sinclair Goldsmith, the quoted property agent.

But while the stimulating effect of such cut-price rents is good news for the letting market, the substantial reductions could send a new chill through the investment market, where valuations are usually based on the latest evidence of open-market rents rather than the rent an incumbent tenant is actually paying.

Mr Sinclair's comments came after his firm had successfully let a 45,000 sq ft building in St Martin's Lane to Carlton Television, the new holder of the London weekday commercial television franchise.

The letting, he believed, was the largest single transaction to have taken place in the West End for more than a year.

When the building was completed last June, the initial asking rent sought by its developer, Grosvenor Square Properties, was £47.50 a square foot.

Mr Sinclair said, however, that it was quickly realised that such a rent was simply unrealistic in the current market. So in the autumn of last year the asking rent was cut by a third to £31.80 a square foot.

The landlord very sensibly decided to cut the rent to a level where we could be certain of attracting interest, and it worked," Mr Sinclair said. The final rent that Carlton will pay GSP, a subsidiary of ABP, has not been disclosed but Mr Sinclair said it was "not far off" the reduced asking rent.

Mr Sinclair thinks that every bit as significant as the successful letting of the building is the fact that there was a serious under-bidder.

He added: "Tenants are now coming back into the market because they think it has dropped to a level where it is unlikely to fall further."

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

TSW confirms appeal to Lords over licence

TELEVISION South West will take its case to the House of Lords after failing on Wednesday in a legal challenge to the loss of its licence to a lower cash bidder in October's ITV auction. After a board meeting yesterday, TSW said it would appeal "in view of the importance of the case to TSW and the shortcomings in the Independent Television Commission's decision-making process."

Three Court of Appeal judges refused by a two-to-one majority on Wednesday to quash the ITC's decision to award the licence to Westcountry Television, which bid £7.8 million against TSW's £16.1 million. TSW, which was granted leave to appeal despite the opposition of Westcountry and the ITC, said it hoped the House of Lords would hear its case this month.

Eastern diversifies

EASTERN Electricity, one of the 12 privatised electricity distributors in England and Wales, has set up a subsidiary to sell combined heat and power systems in Britain. Eastern will distribute the Nutec range made by Nedulo, a Dutch business that has about 12 per cent of the British combined heat and power market. The systems, ranging from 30 kilowatts to 770 kilowatts, are mainly used by commercial premises, such as local authority buildings, hotels and leisure centres, where a supply of electricity and steam is needed.

AmBrit defence costs

AMBRIT International, the oil and gas exploration group, spent £420,000 defending itself against Pittencrieff, an unwanted bidder. AmBrit, which last month recommended a £7 million offer from United Energy, another oil and gas explorer, discloses the figure in its results for the year to December 31. These show a 26.2 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £127,000. The 1990 figures were boosted by higher oil prices at the time of the Gulf confrontation. Turnover was £2.64 million against £2.53 million. There is again no dividend.

Court issues tax ruling

INFLATION will be taken fully into account when capital gains tax liability on assets acquired before 1965 is calculated. That is the effect of a Court of Appeal decision on a test case. The Inland Revenue has contended that the allowance was partly lost on assets acquired before the tax was introduced. The test case was brought by a consortium led by David Colison, tax partner of Peters, Elworthy & Moore, a Cambridge accountancy firm, on behalf of a client who inherited antique furniture in 1952. The Inland Revenue can appeal to the House of Lords.

Trump protection plan

TWO of Donald Trump's hotel-casinos in Atlantic City, New Jersey, plan to file for chapter 11 bankruptcy protection next month in an effort to reorganise their debts. Such action by managers at the Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino and Trump's Castle Casino Resort would mirror that taken last year by Mr Trump's other casino, the Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort. Pre-packaged bankruptcies, for which the managers say they plan to file, secure bondholder approvals beforehand to speed what can otherwise be a costly and lengthy stay in the American bankruptcy court.

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Britain wants Unctad to go for 'trade rather than aid'

BY COLIN NARBROUGH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN will seek to focus the work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad) on the poorest economies and underline the need to pursue development through trade rather than aid, according to Tim Sainsbury, the trade minister.

Mr Sainsbury will represent the government at the Unctad VIII gathering in Cartagena, Colombia, starting on Sunday and to be attended by about 2,000 delegates from 150 countries.

In an interview with *The Times*, he said he believed the new international environment, and the growing recognition among the developing countries of the need for greater self-reliance, meant that Cartagena would represent a "great opportunity". But he made clear that that did not mean telling the developing world "now boys you're on your own".

The time was right, however, for a change of approach to economic development, with the emphasis on "each country being primarily responsible for its own development", he said. This is in keeping with the stance the World Bank and other international agencies have adopted in recent years to foster "good government" as the



Sainsbury: self-reliance key to attracting financial resources into developing countries.

Kenneth Dazie, the Unctad secretary-general, said this week that he expected the Cartagena meeting to open the way to UNCTAD becoming a more relevant, effective and flexible organisation.

Mr Sainsbury is keen to point out that dependency on aid has already dwindled remarkably in many parts of the world. Even in Africa, only about 8 per cent of income comes from foreign aid. In Latin America, the figure is below 1 per cent. Reflecting the government's efforts to relieve the debt problems of the poorest nations, Mr Sainsbury said: "The real debate ought to be focusing on the genuinely least developed

countries." At present, rapidly advancing economies, such as Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea, are grouped as developing nations alongside the poverty-stricken nations of sub-Saharan Africa.

The change of attitude apparent among the developing nations over the best approach to development is, in Mr Sainsbury's view, partly attributable to the collapse of communism in Europe. This has removed the scope for developing countries to play off one bloc against another to pursue economic benefit. Defence spending has also been reduced with the end of East-West confrontation.

Mr Sainsbury, while opposed to international commodity pacts, such as those for coffee, rubber and oil, does not expect developing countries with natural resources to want to terminate the pacts, however well or badly they function. "Producers will always hanker after managed markets," he said.

This week's call from Sir Leon Brittan, the European commissioner, for the broader Gatt framework to be responsible for competition rules worldwide, is likely to be debated at Cartagena, as Unctad has responsibility for restrictive practices. Any merging of the two organisations at this stage would, however, be highly premature, Mr Sainsbury said.

Exor bid ruling confirmed

BY MARTIN BARROW

FRANCE's stock market regulator has confirmed his ruling that Exor, which with its allies forms the main shareholder in Source Perrier, must make a bid for two thirds of the company.

Under French bourse rules a shareholder, or group of shareholders, who hold more than one third of the equity have to bid for two thirds. Another rule requires counter-bidders to offer a price at least 2 per cent higher than the original bid, or offer the same price without conditions.

Exor, which is appealing against the ruling, said that if it is forced to bid for Perrier the offer may be worth just Fr1.235 a share.

Nestlé and Indosuez have bid Fr1.475 a share for all Perrier's capital. They have also reserved the right to drop their bid if they obtain less than 51 per cent of Perrier.

An Exor spokesman said that the bid price rule did not apply to Exor and its allies because Nestlé and Indosuez launched their bid after an Exor ally increased its stake, the move which triggered the Exor bid requirement.

Exor said that if it is constrained to make a bid, the price could be as low as that paid by Saint-Louis when it bought a block of Perrier treasury stock on January 3, two weeks before the Nestlé and Indosuez bid.

UK accident report angers Cyprus

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU
IN NICOSIA

ACCUSATIONS by Britain's Marine Accident Investigation Branch that Cyprus's shipping legislation may be inadequate were furiously denied by government officials on the island, which has worked hard to become a leading maritime nation.

Britain's criticisms came in a draft report on an accident last April in which a Cypriot-flagged cargo vessel sailed on after colliding in bad weather with a Portsmouth fishing trawler whose crew of six drowned. A court in Cyprus later dismissed all charges against the captain and first mate of the Cypriot ship, saying there was no evidence to prove they willfully abandoned the stricken trawler.

The BMAIB report was damning in its general conclusions. Captain Peter Marriot, chief inspector of accidents, said: "There is evidence that the Cyprus merchant shipping legislation may be

inadequate, in parts, to enable the appropriate authority to enforce and fully discharge their international obligations as a leading maritime nation."

Serghios Serghiou, the director of merchant shipping in Cyprus, said: "I believe they made this report to satisfy public opinion in Portsmouth."

"Cyprus is an easy victim because we're not a powerful nation."

With 2,100 ships totalling more than 20 million gross tons, Cyprus has the sixth-largest fleet in the world. Keen to avoid criticism that it is a flag of convenience, it has launched an expensive campaign in recent years to improve standards and services.

Limassol claims to be the world's leading ship management centre, hosting companies like Haseatic, Columbia, and Seafarers, attracted by a combination of tax incentives, good telecommunications, a skilled local workforce and low living costs.

Loukas Loucaides, Cyprus's deputy at-

torney general, who unsuccessfully prosecuted the case against the Zulfikar's captain and first mate, said: "It's a very unfair, inaccurate and misleading report, the motives of which I suspect. Throughout, I don't believe the British authorities have acted objectively. Like in Britain, our courts are independent. As prosecutor, I may even have disagreed with the Zulfikar decision, but it was bona fide and I respect it."

Cyprus appointed a special committee two years ago to upgrade its shipping laws to match international standards and its work will soon be completed, Mr Serghiou said. But, he added that, concerning maritime safety, Cyprus is already up to date, having ratified the International Safety of Life at Sea Convention in 1985.

Bereaved families in Portsmouth last November branded the court's decision a whitewash.

The case was tried under British and international maritime law.

Domestic customers to benefit from results of Littlechild enquiry into electricity charges

Watchdog promises power price rises of less than inflation

BY ROSS TYEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

ELECTRICITY prices for domestic customers in England and Wales will rise on average by less than the rate of inflation in the financial year beginning in April, Professor Stephen Littlechild, the director general of electricity supply, has promised.

Professor Littlechild, head of Oftec, the regulatory body, said he had secured a commitment to increases averaging less than 3.7 per cent. In total, increases would secure revenue for the companies £30 million below the maximum to which they are entitled under the inflation-linked price control formula.

The director general launched an enquiry into the price rise plans of nine of the companies last October because he was concerned that inflation for the year to the end of this March would turn out below expectations when prices for the year were set.

Professor Littlechild has concluded that eight of the

companies will in total receive £60 million more from customers than they should. Four companies, London Electricity, Manweb, Seaboard and Yorkshire Electricity, have promised to refund any excess receipts to customers by charging less next year.

Four other companies, Eastern Electricity, Northern Electric, Norweb and Southern Electric, have insisted that they are entitled to keep the extra revenue, but have agreed to refund excess receipts through lower prices anyway.

The modest increases for domestic customers contrast sharply with forecasts that bulk power prices will rise by 25 to 30 per cent this year. However, the cost of generating electricity makes up a small component of domestic bills. Most of the cost of supplying households relates to maintenance of a complex distribution network.

Large industrial users, for whom the generating charge

is a much bigger element, face much steeper price increases. Professor Littlechild warned the generators yesterday that he will be monitoring prices in the pool, or spot market, for electricity very closely.

He said customers should regard the outcome of his efforts as satisfactory. However, "regulation would be more straightforward and the companies, as well as customers would benefit, if the controls were less dependent on forecasts of inflation."

The director general said he would take on board the lessons of the enquiry in his forthcoming review of price controls on the power companies.

Removal of the link between power prices and inflation would be warmly welcomed by many economists and businessmen, who have argued that it helps to perpetuate inflationary pressures in the economy.

John Collier, chairman of Nuclear Electric, the state-owned atomic power company, has written to the Major Energy Users' Council, protesting at plans by large industrial companies to withhold payment of the 11 per cent levy on power bills used to subsidise the nuclear industry.

Mr Collier said the increase in prices in the electricity pool, which triggered the companies' protest plan, has "nothing to do with the levy." He said most of the £1.2 billion-a-year subsidy was needed to pay for decommissioning of the stations when they reach the end of their lives.

He added: "The viability of both National Power and PowerGen is being assured by subsidies in their hedging contracts with the regional electricity companies, at a level roughly equivalent to the levy."

Real price rises in the pool are inevitable because generators' true operating costs as these subsidies decline.



Ties that bind: Stephen Littlechild wants to see price controls less dependent on inflation forecasts

Salomon leaps 67% despite oil loss

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

SALOMON Inc. the scandal-hit Wall Street investment bank, yesterday reported a 67 per cent rise in net profits despite losses in its oil business.

Last year was one of the best on record for Wall Street firms, many of whose profits tripled or even quadrupled on the back of a surging stock market and an avalanche of new share and bond issues. Salomon said last month that its figures would not match optimistic forecasts of analysts. Net profits rose last year from \$303 million to \$507 million on total revenues up from \$8.9 billion to \$9.1 billion.

The bank's Wall Street profits more than doubled from \$416 million to \$1.036

billion, but the Phibro Energy oil trading and refining business plunged \$34 million into the red. In 1990, Phibro's \$492 million profit accounted for more than half the group total.

Andrew Hall, the former BP executive who is president of Phibro, was paid \$23 million during that year. Mr Hall's salary, which is linked to the performance of the division he heads, is expected to drop this year.

Salomon's new management, headed by Warren Buffett, the billionaire investor, with Deryck Maughan as chief operating officer, has recently changed the system of paying what some analysts regard as excessive bonuses to some of the firm's individuals.

Salomon has suffered a wave of defections of senior

staff in its research department after bonuses were declared. It is expected to announce more departures this month, after paying out the \$130 million bonus pool to senior managing directors. The pool was set up five years ago to keep staff in the aftermath of the 1987 stock market crash.

Salomon declines to break down its figures, but says its Wall Street profits were generated largely from bonds, arbitrage and the highly specialised investments derived from the stock and bond markets. It has already said its breaches of the Treasury bond market rules did not generate a significant profit.

Last August, Salomon admitted breaching the rules in several of the US government Treasury bond auctions but it has not yet been estab-

lished that Salomon committed any wrongdoing in the "short squeeze" last May, in which prices were driven higher and some market traders claim they incurred losses. Four of Salomon's top executives resigned over the scandal.

Investment banking added \$80 million profit, reversing declines in 1989 and 1990 as fees from underwriting new cash-raising by American corporations offset the drop in bids and deals. Its oil refining operations, the third-largest in America, lost \$60 million in the final three months of last year, largely because of a writedown of the value of the oil in its pipes.

Donald Howard, Salomon's finance director, said the oil operations had not been "terribly profitable" throughout the year.

Figures suggest delay in recovery

BY COLIN NARBROUGH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT
THE downturn in business confidence reported by the Confederation of British Industry was the main cause of an 0.6 per cent fall in the government's longer leading indicator for January, the Central Statistical Office (CSO) said.

In the City, the drop in the longer leader, which tracks turning points in economic activity about ten months ahead, and a slight downturn in the shorter leading index, which looks four months forward, were seen as confirmation that recovery will be delayed this year, with a modest upturn coming only in the second half.

Robert Lind, economist at UBS Phillips & Drew, said a fallback in the indicators had been expected on the basis of recent survey evidence and official economic data. He believes output could fall for a few months before a "mild upturn" in the second half of this year.

The CSO said the longer leading index turned up in May 1990 and continued to rise until last October.

Provisional figures suggest that a turning point may have been reached last May in the shorter leading index, which has also shown a slight downturn because of the latest gloomy survey results and lower registrations of new cars.

The coincident index, which traces the business cycle, has started to decline at a markedly slower rate since last May, after more favourable survey evidence on stocks and capacity. The CSO has, however, cautioned against reading too much into the coincident data, given their partial nature.

In Washington, Nicholas Brady, the treasury secretary, said there were "some encouraging signs" for America, although many factors had made the economy sluggish.

In testimony to the Senate budget committee, he said the spiral of rising prices had been halted and interest rates were now at the lowest for 20 years. All this had occurred against the backdrop of the end of the cold war. That would prove to be, over time, an economic stimulus of enormous proportions, Mr Brady said.

Team of three is named to replace chief of Lloyd's

BY JONATHAN PRYNN

THE search for a successor to Alan Lord as chief executive of Lloyd's of London has been postponed for at least a year, pending completion and implementation of a report on the future governance of the market.

Lloyd's had intended to appoint a replacement to take over when Mr Lord retires in June. Goddard Kay Rogers, a firm of headhunters, was hired last year to draw up a short list of candidates.

However, the plans have been abandoned after controversy over the rejection by the Council of Lloyd's of recommendations on governance in the recent Rowland Task Force report. The section on governance, which recommended splitting the council's regulatory and market operating roles, was the only part of the report to be rejected out of hand by the council.

Adverse reaction to the decision led to the appointment last month of a working party, to be chaired by Sir Jeremy Morse, chairman of Lloyd's Bank, to examine the governance issue. That was widely seen as a climbdown by the council.

Mr Lord said yesterday that from July 1 his role

would be taken over by a triumvirate of senior Lloyd's officials: John Gaynor, the head of finance, Andrew Duguid, head of market services, and Bob Hewes, head of regulatory services.

The appointment of the three-man team would ensure "the continued management of the Corporation in the style we have become used to in the past few years". Mr Lord said there would be "no hiatus, no lacuna".

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Mr Lord said yesterday that from July 1 his role

Kevin Maxwell questioned

BY NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

KEVIN Maxwell was questioned in a private hearing in the High Court yesterday about the whereabouts of the missing Maxwell company pension funds.

The court session follows his submission on Wednesday of an affidavit to the pension fund liquidators. This, for the first time, details the financial dealings of Bishopsgate Investment Management, the company that managed the bulk of the pension money, where Mr Maxwell was a director.

Robson Rhodes, the liquidator of BIM, is trying to trace up to £400 million of pension fund assets. Mr Maxwell was questioned under oath in front of a companies court registrar. The hearing is expected to continue today. Mr Maxwell had claimed that he had the right to remain silent to avoid the risk of self-incrimination.

On Monday, he lost his legal battle to remain silent when the House of Lords refused his appeal request. The Court of Appeal had earlier decided that the Insolvency Act forced him to hand over details about BIM's affairs.

France challenges Brittan over state firms' accounts

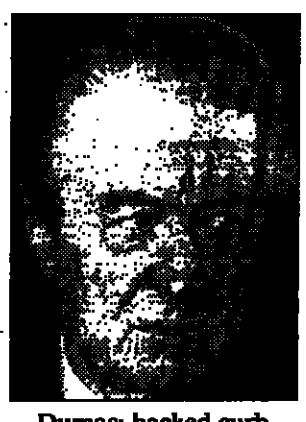
FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

FRANCE has challenged Sir Leon Brittan before the European Court of Justice over his edict that leading European Community public-sector companies should submit accounts to Brussels every year.

The move is just the latest development in the catalogue of French objections to the competition commissioner's increasingly vigilant watch over state-aided industrial groups, which pepper the industrial spectrum in France.

The rules are intended to help the Commission detect state aids, such as the sweeteners paid to British Aerospace for the Rover acquisition, at an early stage and thus prevent lengthy legal wrangles. France, which had to recover nearly £1 billion from Renault in the most famous EC state-aid case, says the new regime is over-intrusive.

"We are contesting the substance as well as the form of these rules. We think the commission is discriminating against public-sector companies — large private companies are not required to submit these reports. It puts



Dumas: backed curb public companies in an inferior position, a French official said.

present array of competition weapons from the full 17-member commission.

Roland Dumas, the French foreign minister, last year backed a plan that would have forced Sir Leon to have cleared many of his anti-trust manoeuvres with Martin Bangemann, the industry commissioner, but it was this initiative that was defeated in the commission this week.

France and Italy both accused Sir Leon of wrecking the interests of European industry last October when he blocked the bid by ATR, the Franco-Italian plane maker, for De Havilland of Canada, and the French government clearly refuses to let the matter rest.

The Court of Justice normally takes at least two years to consider such appeals.

In the case of the competition information exchange, France argues that Sir Leon has no right to make deals unilaterally with third countries; the argument against the new accounts procedure is that it discriminates between public and private companies, which according to the Treaty of Rome should be treated equally in competition cases.

Sir Leon argues both the new accounting and information arrangements fall within his remit; obviously for France, earlier this week he received backing for his

Inland revenue to pay back tax

BY LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

THE Inland Revenue has set about tracing more than 7 million people who are paying tax unnecessarily.

They are non-taxpayers who have not registered for interest on their savings to be paid gross.

The Inland Revenue is launching a £500,000 advertising campaign this weekend to encourage savers to claim back tax deducted from their interest or the dividends paid on shares and unit trusts.

To help people to make applications simply and quickly, all tax refund offices will be manned from 8 am to 8 pm seven days a week from Sunday to deal with free-phone calls from investors who believe they are affected.

BT will connect people with their local tax office if they telephone 0800 66 0800.

Most of the people who qualify for refunds are children, pensioners and wives who are not in paid employment. Since last April, they have been able to register savings accounts for gross payment of interest.

So far, 13 million accounts are receiving interest without deduction of interest. This probably accounts for half of the accounts held by the 15 million non-taxpayer savers, according to Francis Maude, the financial secretary to the Treasury, who launched the Taxback scheme yesterday.

Children and pensioners may only be owed a few pounds each, said Mr Maude. Others could be owed hundreds of pounds.

Cathay chief takes the controls at Dan-Air

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT



Olsen: tough job

JOHN Olsen, the European general manager of Cathay Pacific, who has been with the Hong Kong-based long-haul airline for 25 years, is to take over the day-to-day running of Dan-Air.

Mr Olsen will take over as group chief executive in April and, according to David James, Dan-Air's chairman, will be "riding into where the gunfire is thickest". Dan-Air is facing what many within the aviation and travel industry regard as its most critical year.

Mr James put together a financial restructuring last year that pulled the group back from the brink of collapse, and outlined a business strategy that would turn the struggling airline into profit within the next three years. The plan relied on the appointment of

a chief executive who would be able to push through the structural changes.

Although Mr Olsen, aged 49, has had only limited experience of short-haul scheduled operations or of charter flights, his success in developing Cathay's high-quality reputation among European travellers won him what could prove to be one of the toughest jobs in the British aviation industry.

Mr James, who had originally said he would give up his involvement with Dan-Air once a new chief executive was appointed but who has now agreed to stay on as chairman, said last night that Mr Olsen's experience in yield management and marketing would help to push Dan-Air upmarket. Over the

past 12 months, Dan-Air has switched its focus from charter to scheduled flights by increasing the number of aircraft dedicated to a growing number of scheduled routes and reducing the number available for charter. This has meant that it has been able to keep its charter rates high as supply has hardly kept pace with demand. Mr James said: "For the first time in our lives we are in the driving seat."

On scheduled routes, within Europe, however, he admitted that competition was fierce. "I accept that we are riding into where the gunfire is thickest and some areas are outside our control."

Passenger traffic, he said, was generally assumed to grow at double the rate of

gross domestic product and many of his forecasts had been based upon that assumption. "We have no reason to alter our forecast for what we would achieve during 1991, but for 1992 much depends on market growth, which is outside our control."

Mr Olsen said that when he joined Cathay it had been considered a short-haul airline operating services to the Asian region. "I am going to this job fresh but not without experience," he said. "It would be premature for me to say what we will be concentrating on. I need to learn about the business, understand it and achieve a balance between the scheduled and charter operations. Most important of all, I must make sure that we remain viable."

National Westminster Bank Interest Rates

National Westminster Bank announces the following interest rates, effective from 7 February 1992:

Savings			
Net Interest per annum		Gross Interest per annum	Gross C.A.R.†
7.31% 7.13% 6.84%	Crown Reserve 3 Months' notice £25,000 and above	9.75%	10.11%
	£10,000 - £24,999	9.50%	9.84%
	£2,000 - £9,999	9.125%	9.44%
6.94% 6.75% 6.47%	Premium Reserve Instant Access £25,000 and above	9.25%	9.58%
	£10,000 - £24,999	9.00%	9.31%
	£2,000 - £9,999	8.625%	8.91%
5.44% 5.06% 4.97% 4.59%	Special Reserve Instant Access £25,000 and above	7.25%	7.45%
	£10,000 - £24,999	6.75%	6.92%
	£2,000 - £9,999	6.625%	6.79%
	£500 - £1,999	6.125%	6.27%
4.88% 4.50% 4.13% 3.75% 3.38%	First Reserve Instant Access £1,000 and above	6.50%	6.66%
	£500 - £999	6.00%	6.14%
	£250 - £499	5.50%	5.61%
	£100 - £249	5.00%	5.09%
	£0 - £99	4.50%	4.58%

* Where appropriate, Basic Rate Tax will be deducted from interest credited or paid (which may be reclaimed by resident non-taxpayers). Subject to the required registration form, interest will be paid gross.

† Gross Compounded Annual Rate (C.A.R.) is the true annual return on your savings if the interest payments are retained in the account.

National Westminster Bank Plc
41 Lothbury London EC2P 2BP

WORLD MARKETS

The company concedes that the new direction will take time to pay off in terms of earnings, despite a blue-



The shares have strong long-term recovery potential, given that the company's survival is not in question. The market is not, however, going to dive in after the

the City likes more than predictability. So full marks to Senior Engineering, which added to its considerable presence in flexible tubing by buying Flexonics, reportedly America's biggest and best when it comes to making and

The pricing, however, ensured a smooth reception for the one-for-four issue, with the existing shares sliding just 2½p to 69½p, ahead of a theoretical ex-rights price of under 69p and well ahead of the 58p issue price.

Assuming all goes according to plan, Flexonics brings with it only £3.3 million of debt, leaving Senior still effectively ungeared and well placed for further expansion. With Senior's own estimate of pre-tax profits of £18.1 million ahead of

Benson Group

Profits for next year are forecast at £2.6 million, assuming no upturn in the economy, giving 1.5p of earnings. That puts the company on an attractive forward multiple of less than nine times earnings. The share price does not reflect the improved prospects for the company.

□ Sydney — The all-ordinaries index fell 8.3 to 1,594.6

The Straits Times industrial index ended at 1,530.85, up 4.88 points from Monday's finish but below the day's high of 1,533.86. (Reuters)

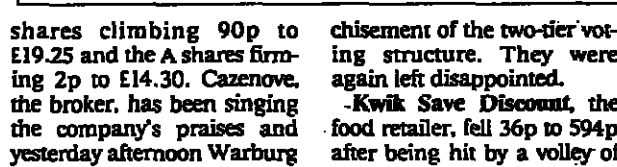
The Nikkei index was up 168.55 points or 0.77 per cent to 22,104.92, with an estimated 200 million shares traded. The futures-linked

"These moves have raised confidence about support on the downside, but whether people will keep on buying as the market rises is another problem," said Kenzo Doi, a market analyst at Kokusai Securities. (Reuters)

STOCK MARKET

Cable and Wireless was also on the hit list, falling 13p to 580p. The shares had to contend with a profits down-

Great Universal Stores enjoyed an early mark-up with the ordinary non-voting



BT ended the session 3 1/2 p firmer at 334 1/2 p and the partly paid 1 1/2 p at 124 p after some words of encouragement from Warburg Securities, the broker. The price was also boosted by the appearance of a large buyer seeking up to 10 million partly paid shares. This failed to be fully reflected in the turnover levels, suggesting that some of the business is still outstanding.

Securities played host to the company and a number of institutions. Fund managers had been hoping for news of the often discussed disenfran-

Full-year figures from P&P, the computer products distributor, showed pre-tax profits collapsing from £13.1 million to £700,000 with the dividend held. This came as a

pleasant surprise to the market, which had been forecasting a loss for the year. The shares responded with a rise of 4p to 43p. Hoare Govett, the broker, is forecasting profits of £3.5 million this year.

Medeva was again benefiting from this week's presentation by Merrill Lynch, the securities house, to fund managers in New York, with

losing 10p at 166p after Smith New Court, the broker, cut its dividend forecast by 1p to 5p and its profit estimate. Analysts say Rolls-Royce remains a headache for the

Forte eased 1p to 223p with analysts apparently unconvinced about prospects after Wednesday's tour of some of the group operations in and around the M25.

in and around the M25 motorway area. It had been hoped the group would report an increase in hotel occupancy rates.

MICHAEL CLARK

WALL STREET

[illegible]

RECENT ISSUES

BITR Warrants 1995/96	55	-2	do Stopt Pkt 124p	120+	+1
Capital Industries 1p	63	...	Seaford Resources (n)	55	...
Exxon Preferred Capital (100)	99	...	RIGHTS ISSUES		
Fleming Japanese Warrants	36	+2	BM Group 10p N/P (330)	73	-6
Latin Amer Inc & Ap (210+)	211+	+1	Citidine Foods 5p N/P (150)	27-15	...
Mutualtrust Warrants	6	...	Hi-Tec Sports N/P (150)	24	...
River & Merc Trc Inc 124p	104	+1	Wholesale MIB (N/P)

MAJOR CHANGES

FRSSES:			
Standard Chartered	420p (+9p)	Lloyds Abbey	380p (-14p)
Liberty	680p (+10p)	Wolsey	413p (-14p)
CS Holdings	210p (+9p)	Victoria	160p (-10p)
Wentworth	210p (+9p)	Hammerston	100p (-17p)
Ranger	402p (-15p)	Estates Agency	213p (-12p)
Tinogloo	385p (+8p)	SJA Breweries	910p (-37p)
BOC	648p (+10p)	Castle Wilkes	54p (-5p)
FAIS: Matthew	355p (+19p)	Broken Hill	180p (-18p)
FALLS:		Gauco	822p (-16p)
Bank New	594p (-32p)	Inchcape	42p (-9p)
Deerly Life	330p (-22p)		
		Closing Prices	Page 25

The results also included a 30.6 million guilder extraordinary gain, partly derived from the sale of a 49 per cent interest in KLM Helicopters. Analysts had forecast a loss of between 40 million and 70 million guilders for the quarter. KLM reported a 630 million guilder loss for the 1990-1 financial year.

Lihir is big, fascinating, challenging and expensive. However, while Niugini has always been anxious that development should proceed at Lihir, RTZ — which would have to bear the lion's share of

The amount of gold potentially to be won from Lihir is estimated at between 16.4 million and 26.5 million ounces. The deposit falls into the "low grade" class and will require bulk tonnage movement of rock. Cash operating costs over the first five years are estimated at \$142 an ounce — against a current world gold price of about \$355 — rising to \$204 an ounce over the life of the mine. Expansion from the scaled-down

FROM AFP IN PARIS

On Tuesday, Vladimir Lopukhin, Russian energy minister, said: Russia's oil production had dropped from 568 million tonnes in 1988 to 450 million in 1991.

Mr Sorokin also indicated that President Yeltsin's three-day visit to France should allow for progress on a number of Franco-Russian economic projects, notably in the oil and gas industries.

Forgetting the bid essentials

The hostile assault on James Wilkes by Petrocon was hardly a clash of corporate titans. But interest has been quickened by a swift and firm slap on the wrist by the Takeover Panel for all three corporate finance advisers then involved, including N M Rothschild, one of the City's blue-blooded merchant banks. Some discreet advance canvassing has become an accepted practice, to establish if there is even minimal support for a mooted takeover bid. In an excess of zeal Henry Cooke Corporate Finance and Smith New Court Corporate Finance went considerably further. Their claim of 30 per cent verbal support by Monday, when Petrocon's bid was finally announced, suggests that, allowing for a few dissenting voices, a sizeable chunk of the share register must have been in on the secret.

There are no prizes for guessing what the share price did next, and it is up to the Stock Exchange's insider dealing unit to decide if there were suspicious share dealings and if so, what action to take next. The panel has ruled that the two securities houses, which should have been particularly careful in such circumstances, breached the code by not consulting panel executives; they are duly criticised. Rothschild, because of what looks like a logistical problem, then failed to put out an announcement of the breakdown of talks between the two parties until the share price had shot ahead further, although the bank takes less of a caning from the panel.

Smith New Court and Henry Cooke still appear to be learning in such bid advice and should have done their homework better. As for Rothschild, it is tempting to wonder if takeovers are becoming so rare that even hardened professionals have forgotten what they are supposed to be doing. Clients and shareholders deserve better. Professionals should reacquire themselves with the rulebook.

Thank you Lloyds

Forwell Group's collapse is a reminder of how easily the sensitive relationship between a company and its bank can degenerate into open warfare. Forwell's management blames Lloyds Bank for the company's failure, because Lloyds insisted that it reduce its debts and failed to support a rescue plan. Lloyds in turn believes it did everything it could to save the company, but was ultimately forced to call in its £1.4 million loan to protect its shareholders and depositors, although this precipitated the collapse.

Similar disputes are occurring across the country, resulting in receiverships, liquidations, job losses and losses to banks. In an increasing number of bigger cases, banks move Heaven and Earth to rescue a troubled company which has a viable core business. Most of the time they shrink from continuing high-risk capital to troubled businesses and feel obliged to call in their loans. What makes Lloyds' behaviour in this case disgraceful are the letters sent to two of Forwell's staff on January 27, while it was still trying to formulate a rescue plan. These said the company was bankrupt. The mistake stemmed from a misunderstanding in one of Lloyds' branches and the bank has apologised. But these irresponsible letters shattered morale in Forwell's offices and effectively killed any hope of deliverance.

Almost 50,000 companies went into receivership or liquidation in Britain last year, with devastating effects on the banks' balance sheets. The banks need to treat surviving businesses with care, for their own sakes as well as the economy's.

Cresson takes the bull by the horns in picking IBM as France's partner

The Bull-IBM deal was a nimble piece of business and political footwork by the French prime minister, argues Wolfgang Münchau

There used to be a saying in the computer industry that "nobody ever got fired for choosing IBM". Edith Cresson, the French prime minister, must have remembered that when she chose IBM, and not Hewlett-Packard, the apparent front-runner, as a strategic partner for Groupe Bull, the French state-owned computer maker.

The deal, under which IBM takes a stake in the electronics group, amounts to a rare coup for the stumbling Cresson government, despite widespread and justified doubts about her ambitious industrial policy, and especially her seemingly quixotic quest to sort out the mess in which the French state-owned electronics industry has landed itself. A genuinely good business deal always serves more than one purpose, and this appears to be so with the latest Bull deal.

For IBM, the big attraction is the prospect of gaining access to the lucrative government procurement market. There also exists at present a tough battle between various computer standards, and it is crucial for IBM to lure as many competitors as possible into its own technological camp. In return for these benefits, IBM was prepared to be generous. It will invest about \$100 million, perhaps more, for a stake in Bull of between 5 and 10 per cent, but for IBM this is only a token gesture to show "commitment".

For Bull the deal brings access to IBM's second-generation technology, technology it failed to develop in the Eighties, and which it now has no chance of catching up on without outside help. Mme Cresson, true to age-old Gallic fears of the East, was notably sniffy about an earlier deal to bring in Japan's NEC as a shareholder.

For her government, the latest move, along with a host of others involving IBM, Apple Computer, Hewlett-Packard, and SGS Thomson, the Franco-Italian computer maker, is the second most important step in the restructuring of France's electronics industry. The first big reshuffle came in December with the announced merger of the Thomson electronics group and the state-owned nuclear energy group into a giant holding company to be called Thomson-CEA.

Mme Cresson's decision to choose a private-sector partner, and especially IBM, rather than Hewlett-Packard, which, according to some industry insiders, would have offered a technologically superior deal—shows French industrial policy at its most Machiavellian, not



No more chauvinists: Edith Cresson and Francis Lorentz are happy to choose IBM

least because of the European dimension.

For Sir Leon Brittan, the European competition commissioner, it might have more frustrating implications. Sir Leon is looking at a promised Fr6.6 billion French government package, made up of new capital and research subsidies, aimed at helping Bull to escape its predicament. He is no friend of French state subsidies, and this deal will make it harder for him to raise objections against what many people in the industry would regard as an unfair state subsidy.

The commission uses the private-investor test as a benchmark for its decisions: if a private investor—IBM in this case—participates in a capital increase, then, so the argument goes, the action must be justified on commercial grounds and does not constitute a hidden subsidy. The commission would find it very difficult to prove that the French government is subsidising Bull, even if superficially this appears to be the case.

For the rest of Europe, the deal marks an end to hopes—or fears—that there exists a wholly indigenous European solution to the difficulties of the sector.

Siemens ridiculed the European idea from the outset, and announced last year that it has struck a

deal with IBM over the joint production of a 16-megabit chip. An agreement to develop a 64-megabit chip had already been in place.

The change in French attitudes towards so-called European solutions is subtle, though unmistakable. Francis Lorentz, chairman of Bull, said that last year he had proposed to Carlo De Benedetti, president of Olivetti, and to Siemens, of Germany, a joint venture company aimed at exploiting the upper and most profitable segment of the market. "But nothing happened," he said.

I may be, M Lorentz believes, that we have the wrong idea about what is meant by European industry. "European means to have one or several decision centres based in Europe, to develop European competence, to have high value-added business," he said. "To do that, you need research centres. All of us have to work closely with the Americans and the Japanese. However, if the decision centre is moving from one country to another, the companies will not have the same value-added, and the same know-how base."

The bottom line for M Lorentz is ownership. European means majority owned by Europeans. Hence, he argues that "ICL has become Japa-

nese. That is not my problem. I like the people, they do good work. But they can't say they are Europeans."

All these events occur against a backdrop of severe difficulties for the whole industry. Excepting ICL, none of the indigenous European computer companies is making any money. Last year, computer sales were down by 7.8 per cent worldwide, according to Dataquest, an American consultancy. Why that should be so is not quite as obvious as it seems. The recession, the usual excuse for failure, can at best offer a partial explanation. The computer industry has also become victim of its own technological success. The market may have grown strongly throughout the Eighties, but the growth of technology has outstripped demand, and costs, especially research and development, have escalated.

In other industries this would have led to concentration. Not so here. The computer industry might be one of the most competitive, but it is also one of the least hostile. The approach is co-operative, at least on the surface. Of all the computer makers, there is nobody more expert at this game than IBM.

Signor De Benedetti said this week that he, too, had been approached by IBM, but he rejected IBM's plans, which he considers a

"Trojan horse" strategy. The wider fear is that IBM might behave like a computer virus, which starts unnoticed, ending up corrupting and destroying the entire system.

Whatever the merits of these alliances, companies such as Bull often have little choice. From Bull's point of view, the most important aspect of this alliance is not the symbolic equity injection, but the cost-saving to be realised through joint production and, by far the most important, the access to IBM's second-generation technology, used mainly in workstations—the only growing segment of the market. These workstations are based on a technology that goes by the name of Risc, or reduced instruction set computing, a technique that uses fewer instructions to a microprocessor, thereby speeding up the performance of a computer.

Bull has failed to develop its own Risc technology, and has instead opted for a Risc technology based on the widely available Mips chip, which is supported by the Advanced Computing Environment (ACE), a consortium of over 40 computer makers. This consortium includes Bull, but not IBM, HP or Apple.

In commercial terms, the difference between these systems is that IBM's or HP's proprietary Risc technology is more "up-market" than that of Mips in that it is expected to command higher profit margins. Both IBM and HP are developing their own technology, but there exists a body of opinion which holds that HP's Risc technology is superior to IBM's. HP has another advantage in that its market share of workstations in Europe is greater than that of IBM.

For Bull, however, the IBM deal offers additional attractions, not least the opportunity to participate in the most strategic of alliances yet struck in this industry: the co-operation deal struck last year between IBM, Motorola, the chip maker, and Apple, IBM's erstwhile arch-rival and now apparently one of its closest allies.

From these considerations, one might conclude that competition in this industry is not merely between companies, but between groups of companies that share technologies, and that the make-up of such alliances is prone to change.

Michael Armstrong, head of IBM's international trade business, said that no single company, however big, has the resources to go it alone. IBM recognised this trend some time ago yet it remains the world's largest, and also Europe's largest, computer maker, despite its much-reported financial problems. In Britain alone, the company has a turnover of £4 billion, dwarfing anybody else.

Most important, the IBM-Bull alliance is a welcome departure from old-fashioned French industrial policy, which has finally recognised that even the Paris version of Euro-chauvinism has its limits.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Murray to mint it for Hill

AFTER a year of sackings and financial woe, Hill Samuel, the TSB's merchant banking arm, finally seems to be getting things right. It has found a new vice-chairman in Murray Stuart, deputy chairman of the Audit Commission and one of Britain's most able business leaders. Stuart, who stepped down as chief executive of Berisford International in December and is a past chairman of MB Group, takes up his new role on February 18 and plans to devote a third of his time to Hill Samuel's affairs. In particular he will be helping Richard Heley, head of corporate finance, drum up some new business—something the bank could use after crashing to a loss of £419 million in the year to October 1991, the worst such fall in British merchant banking history. Lack of money was not in evidence when Hill Samuel held its annual dinner for financial editors in London last night. The site chosen for the feast was Spencer House, ancestral home of the Princess of Wales, and a venue that does not come cheap.

Deals on wheels

COULD it really be a year and a half since the European Commission's answer to meals on wheels, the mobile information unit or MIU, was unveiled in a blaze of publicity outside Westminster? The MIU, little more than a caravan stocked with electronic gadgets and linked to Brussels by satellite, set out on a gospel-like mission to explain the single market to unsuspecting villagers in the north of England. Even though representatives of the



trade and industry department at Westminster to see the van, sponsored by Ernst & Young, the accountant, on its way— it escaped being wheel-dumped, to the disappointment of photographers present—nothing was subsequently heard of it... until now, that is. It seems that the Law Society has dragged the van back out of obscurity to appear in a series of roadshows planned for March and April. Solicitors, it says, will be able to learn about dealing with the EC and the single market. Can't wait.

Far-sighted

TIM Sainsbury, minister for trade, has discovered a novel use for the Canary Wharf skyscraper in London's Docklands. His new office on Victoria Street, just across the road from the local Sainsbury branch, commands a panoramic view of London's landmarks, including the distinctive Canary Wharf obelisk. It seems that he finds the monument to Olympia & York's enterprise very useful for judging the quality of air in the capital. Indeed, the presence of smog may have dire consequences for his dialogue with the captains of British

industry. For he jokingly suggests starting a semaphore network to communicate with other high risers such as John Banham, the CBI director general, whose Centre Point headquarters is well in the sights of the DTI.

Glass winners

LALIQUE, the French family-owned crystal company with headquarters in Paris's Rue Royale, has struck a deal with the organisers of the Winter Olympics, which open in Albertville tomorrow. Not only is it providing the games with the 330 medals to be distributed during the two-week event but has broken with Olympic tradition by making them out of crystal. The new-style medals are engraved with a mountain perspective and fringed by gold, silver or bronze. Lalique will not disclose the quantity of fine gold and pure silver used, the price per medal struck with the Olympic Committee, or details of its annual financial results. But the deal cannot hurt profits at the company, which relies on exports for 80 per cent of its earnings, employs 600 people and has shops in London, Frankfurt, New York, Singapore, Hong Kong and Osaka.

Irons out

The high level of redundancies at BP—where 3,000 jobs are to go this year—has led to the revival of an old joke that did the rounds in the City after the 1987 stock market crash when jobs were being lost left, right and centre. Question: What do you call an optimist at BP? Answer: Someone who keeps five shirts in their cupboard on Sunday.

JON ASHWORTH

British Gas's conservation trust needs a political will to drive it

From the Director of the Association for the Conservation of Energy

Sir, The announcement (Business News, February 5) that British Gas is to set up a trust, to finance installation of £120 million p.a. worth of energy conservation measures into its customers' homes and offices, is welcome. It is made doubly so by the knowledge that the regulatory body, Ofgas, may be prepared to offer the company financial incentives to ensure the trust's success. Without these, there is every danger of such initiatives declining into mere public relations gestures, intended to encourage fuel switching rather than energy saving. It is the profligate use of fossil fuels which has led to the world's most pressing environmental threat, global warming. Numerous studies

Prophet and loss

From Mr Joshua Vannack
Sir, Valuing intangibles on extrapolated past results is neither prudent nor cautious. In the future, when reported losses occur, investors and bankers will have the added alarm of sudden write-downs in intangible assets. Surely this is a "fair weather" concept which imputably ignores the downside "storm" scenario.

To conclude: predictions into the future really belong in the chairman's and directors' reports. Auditors quite rightly prophesy that a company is a "going concern" into the short-term future, but prophecy is not an exact science and does not deserve the credibility of a place in the balance sheet.

Yours faithfully,
JOSHUA VANNACK,
69 Barrons Way,
Comberton,
Cambridge.

have demonstrated the potential for the developed world drastically to reduce energy consumption by improving efficiency, whilst still improving living standards. All that is required to achieve this is sufficient political will, together with appropriate incentives for the purveyors of pollution to assist in the process.

For the first time in Britain, we now have the potential to introduce such incentives. Both Ofgas and British Gas are to be congratulated upon their achievements. All that remains is to ensure that there is sufficient political will behind the trust to ensure that it succeeds.

Shares and power

From Major R.N.B. Freeman
Sir, A number of letters from your readers over the last few weeks has emphasised the powerlessness of the private shareholder.

Surely what is needed from the prime minister is a private shareholders' charter. After all, he has encouraged us to go into Peps, where we have to pay to vote on the shares we hold, and into pension plans, where we get no vote at all.

It appears the Conservatives have encouraged a powerless shareholding democracy. You gave the people the shares, now give them the power!

Yours faithfully,
MAJOR R.N.B. FREEMAN,
34 Whitelands Avenue,
Chorleywood,
Buckinghamshire.

Letters to The Times Business and Finance section can be sent by fax on 071-782 5112.

NEW RATES FROM THE CHESHIRE FOR ACCOUNTS NO LONGER AVAILABLE TO NEW INVESTORS.

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	INTEREST PAID	GROSS RATE	NET RATE
BONUS 91 - MATURITY ISSUE			
£2,500+ (with 4% gross guaranteed bonus)	Annually	9.80%	7.35%
£25,000+ (with 5% gross guaranteed bonus)	Annually	10.80%	8.10%
PREMIUM INCOME			
£5,000+	Monthly	8.75%	6.56%
£10,000+	Monthly	9.25%	6.94%
£25,000+	Monthly	9.75%	7.31%
CAPITAL PLUS SPECIAL ISSUE			
£10,000+	Annually	8.63%	6.47%
£25,000+	Annually	9.17%	6.88%
CAPITAL PLUS			
£10,000+	Annually	7.70%	5.78%
CAPITAL PLUS	Monthly	7.70%	5.78%
SUPERSHARE PLUS			
£1+	Annually	4.80%	3.60%
£500+	Annually	7.65%	5.74%
£5,000+	Annually	8.05%	6.04%
£10,000+	Annually	8.20%	6.15%
£30,000+	Annually	8.45%	6.34%
£2,000+	Monthly	7.39%	5.54%
£5,000+	Monthly	7.77%	5.83%
£10,000+	Monthly	7.91%	5.93%
£20,000+	Monthly	8.14%	6.11%
CHAMPION BOND (2nd Issue)	Annually	6.17%	4.63%
CHAMPION BOND (3rd Issue)	Annually	7.57%	5.68%
FLEXIBLE FUND £1+	Half Yearly	5.70%	4.28%
£25,000+	Yearly	6.37%	4.78%
THRIFT SAVERS	Annually	5.50%	4.13%
DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS	Half Yearly	3.50%	2.63%
DEPOSIT - Company Accounts	Half Yearly	3.37%	2.53%
- Gross Accounts	Yearly	8.45%	---
ORDINARY SHARE	Half Yearly	2.25%	1.69%

The gross rates of interest on all other closed accounts will be reduced by 0.75%. Annual interest is payable on 31st December and half yearly interest is payable on 30th June and 31st December. Interest will be payable net of basic rate income tax (currently 25% which may be reclaimed by non taxpayers) or subject to the required certification can be paid gross. Rates may vary - withdrawals subject to branch and agency limits.

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KYOSHI WATANO, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ALPS ELECTRIC (UK) LTD.

How I got where I am today

Kyoshi Watano is a board member of Alps, a \$3 billion global electronics firm. He also heads a United Kingdom workforce of over 600 people manufacturing and exporting high technology electronic components to customers throughout Europe. How did he get where he is today? He successfully developed his manufacturing operations in a city with the most advanced telecommunications in Britain. Where European markets are easily reached by rail, air and sea. And where 25 million people live within a 2 hour drive. If you'd like your company to get somewhere, ring Bob Hill, Commercial Director Milton Keynes Development Corporation, on (0908) 692692.

MILTON KEYNES

What price help on the move?

Women would feel more secure with a portable telephone, especially when driving alone. A recent Gallup survey for Motorola claims that 73 per cent of people feel safer when carrying a cellular telephone. For women the figure is 97 per cent. Half those interviewed said that when driving alone they had experienced an incident in which a cellular telephone would have helped.

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust has introduced a scheme to provide mobile communications at concessionary subscription rates for use in emergencies, and the Automobile Association has similar plans to help drivers who feel themselves at risk.

Other research also indicates there is a tremendous suppressed demand for mobile telephones — suppressed because of the cost.

The price of the telephones is no longer the hurdle it once was, but subscription costs are prohibitive. An adequate hand portable can cost less than £200 and the price of car telephones is even lower.

A top-range model, however, can still be expensive. Motorola's pocket phone to be announced soon will cost more than £600.

Nor is the cost of the calls a deterrent: these range from a peak 33p a minute within the greater London area down to the cheap rate of 10p a minute.

Many potential customers are being held back by an annual subscription fee of £300, plus VAT. These charges are specified by the two cellular telephone operators, Cellnet and Vodafone. The total bill for an average Cellnet customer, for example, is £60 a month.

Customers cannot deal directly with either operator but must use one of about 60 airtime retailers, who act as intermediaries. Although these retailers may vary some of the charges, prices are unlikely to be any cheaper on average and, may, well, be higher.

The eventual answer is likely to be personal

The cost of mobile phones is inhibiting use in areas of urgent demand. Matthew May reports

communications networks (PCNs) — a new type of system expected to provide mobile telephones for about half the cost of the present cellular network telephones, although none of those planning services will comment on what price levels they expect to set.

In a recent survey by one of three companies planning to launch a PCN, United gave 400 people, both ordinary householders and small businesses, a hand portable connected to the existing cellular networks but charged them as if they were using a PCN.

The conclusion was that if mobile telephones were available at that price tomorrow, they would attract at least two

million more users to the existing 1.3 million who use the cellular networks.

Unitel promises it will have a PCN ready to start by mid 1993 that could reach 25 per cent of the population and is likely to cover the area inside the M25, London's orbital motorway. Some telecommunications experts, however, doubt that anything more than a pilot service will be in operation before 1995.

PCNs require investment of more than £1 billion, and both the recession and the disastrous failure of Telepoint, which was meant to provide Britain with a world first in cheap mobile telephones, have made the industry more cautious.

In October, Phonepoint, the last of the three telepoint services, was switched off. It had attracted only 800 users and like the other services was hampered by being unable to take incoming calls and by the need for customers to be within 100 yards of a base station before the telephone could be used.

Only one licensed operator, Hutchinson Personal Communications, is still planning a telepoint network and hoping to overcome the problem of telepoint phones being unable to receive calls by linking them to a pager. The system, however, will still require users to be in range of a base station.

Last week the AA announced plans for an emergency-only telephone that operates over the Vodafone cellular network and plugs into a car's cigarette lighter. The telephone can be used only to call either the AA for roadside assistance or the emergency services.

The AA says the new service should be available by the summer.

The cost is still high, however. The unit will be about £200, plus a rental of £10 a month, and although calls will be free it is hoped there will be few of them.

His looks poor value compared with a scheme being run by one airline retailer, Ford Cellular, in association with Motorola and the Suzy Lamplugh Trust.

The scheme, described as a personal safety package, reworks the usual charges for mobile telephones to appeal to those who want a mobile phone largely as a precaution against the unexpected and are less concerned about call charges.

The monthly subscription is reduced from £25 to £10 but call charges increase to a standard 30p a minute with no cheap rate.

The offer is open to anybody who buys a Motorola telephone through Ford Cellular. These range from a car telephone at £150, a hand portable at £269 or a pocket telephone at £400.



Warm tones: women feel safer with mobile phones



The soul of tact: Basil Fawley (John Cleese) might benefit from computer lessons in handling rude customers

There's a fly in my software

A computer program trains waiters by simulating restaurant complaints

Does your computer make rude remarks to you? While manufacturers struggle to make their machines more user-friendly, Richard Margetts, a catering lecturer at Granville College, in Yorkshire, has developed a program that positively encourages the computer to be nasty towards its operator.

The software, called Custom, has been funded by the employment department's learning technologies unit, and is designed to help hotel and catering trainees to cope with customers' complaints. Such complaints can make or break a business.

The idea for the program grew out of an unpleasant evening Mr Margetts and his wife had at a hotel. In a scene that could have come from *Fawlty Towers*, the BBC television comedy series, the couple were left standing in the hotel lobby while the receptionist continued making a personal telephone call.

During the meal they were ignored by the waiter and had to order their drinks at the bar and carry them back to the table. The couple complained to the manager who sympathised but said it

was difficult to train staff in customer care.

"Britons are very complacent about complaints," says Mr Margetts, who used to run his own restaurant. "Good service is not seen as being very important."

Hence the computer-based training package. The first part analyses how complaints arise. The complaints include those from the few customers who go to a restaurant determined to make a fuss, perhaps in the hope of a free meal.

Mr Margetts says: "Within the program we have included ways of spotting those complaints, and those that can arise because of a bad experience, somebody has had even before entering the restaurant."

The program will also

identify the complaints that can occasionally arise merely from customer boredom. Somebody may have decided he cannot stand his dining companion, for example, and takes his unhappiness out on the food or the unfortunate waiter.

The waiters assemble a customer profile. "How am I dressed — shabby, average or immaculate?" the computer asks. "Is my accent local or non-local? Do I speak perfect English or might I be a tourist? Am I alone or with a group? Is it a mixed-sex group? What is my age bracket? How much alcohol do I seem to have drunk?"

The computer then suggests successful ways of tackling the customer.

Mr Margetts says: "The idea is that the trainee sees

that personal attributes such as accent or dress are a weak indicator of how a customer will respond during a complaint, whereas attitude and alcohol are much stronger."

In the second part of the program, the computer becomes less than friendly. The trainee takes part in role-play simulations in which the computer acts like a complaining customer.

The computer can be programmed to be angry, rude, reasonable or rambling. The trainee's task is to recognise the warning signs and calm the situation.

At the end of a session, trainees are told how many attempts it has taken to reach the correct response. The results are saved for the course tutor to read.

But although the program uses graphics and text to good effect, it cannot yet convey complex factors such as the customer's tone of voice, body posture or facial expression. Future versions may use video pictures and sound for greater realism.

However, Mr Margetts says there are no plans to incorporate a robot arm that grabs the user by the lapels.

GEORGE COLE

News of your choice

A device that will automatically sift and select items of interest from the masses of information broadcast daily by television and teletext has been developed by British electronics engineers.

Micro Eye TVI will allow users, from business people and researchers to journalists and hobbyists, to make more efficient use of the air waves. The device, a decoder or intelligent card, is the brainchild of engineers at Digithurst, a company in Royston, Hertfordshire.

For capturing pages of teletext, users program the card to search for words, or a series of words, relating to topics of interest. The system then scans the pages for the trigger words, which, if spotted, are downloaded into the decoder. Up to 255 pages can be collected at a time.

Meanwhile, an alert is triggered on the user's per-

A new device will sift information from television and teletext

sonal computer and appears in a small window on one side of the screen. This allows a user to select before either discarding or transferring some into the computer, depending on their suitability.

Peter Kruger, Digithurst's managing director, says: "It can also be programmed to take a few pages that you know always carry, say, business news or politics."

The technique for automatically recording television programmes that feature items of interest works in a similar way. The decoder comes with an infra-red set, allowing the card to be programmed by a video recorder's own handset.

Effectively the card is taught the features of the

video recorder, such as play fast forward, record and channel selection by the video's handset. Once this has been done, the card can be programmed to scan for television broadcasts that mention up to 100 key words.

Mr Kruger says: "Some people might program in the words 'fish' or 'water pollution' because they are interested in marine life. Others may be interested in gardening and might program in 'flowers, floral, tree' or even 'Dutch elm disease'."

The decoder can be programmed to switch off after a set time and switch to stand-by, ready to record when the next interesting word is broadcast. It can also be programmed to stop recording a programme if a key

word is not mentioned again after a certain length of time.

Use of the device, which costs £495 including its software, is limited to broadcasts that carry Ceefax subtitles.

Only a small proportion of broadcasts, such as the news, carry subtitles, but the level is likely to increase in the coming years.

Mr Kruger says the company, which will show Micro Eye TVI for the first time at the CeBIT computer fair in Hannover next month, had considered developing a decoder that could be triggered by key spoken words.

"We do not believe you can make a practical product at the moment," he says. "With teletext, words come up that do not rely on inflections of speech or people coughing in the middle of sentences. However, it will happen in a matter of a few years."

NICK NUTTALL

Cheaper picture

The price of high definition television sets has tumbled since Sharp announced that in May it will sell a 36in HDTV set in Japan for £4,500, almost a quarter of the present price.

The usual price, about £17,000, has effectively limited sales to business and hotels. HDTV programmes, whose crystal-clear pictures match the quality of cinema film, are now broadcast in Japan for eight hours a day. Sharp says the price cut has been achieved by reducing the number of chips used in each set. The new set also has a cathode ray tube that is cheaper to manufacture but sacrifices some clarity. Manufacturers are hoping

the Barcelona Olympics this summer will stimulate sales because big sporting events are good at showing the benefits of high-definition pictures.

Analysts believe the market will not take off, however, until prices fall below £2,000.

Bank check

Banknotes in Belgium may carry a code to prevent photocopying. The quality of the latest colour photocopyers is so good that forgers are often forsaking more conventional methods of counterfeiting.

The Belgian central bank told *De Standaard* that it is negotiating with manufacturers to include a device in photocopyers that will recognise the code and make them seize up.

ONLINE



Fax tracks

People wanting faxes while they are out and about can now receive them from any nearby machine. Inter City Paging has started a service whereby faxes can be sent to a personal fax number, where they are received and stored by a central computer and an alert sent out to the customer by radio pager. The user finds the nearest fax machine and enters a personal retrieval number and the fax is sent.

The service, which Inter City says will work anywhere in the world, will store faxes for up to 72 hours.

Less risk

IBM's decision to buy between 5 and 10 per cent of Groupe Bull, the French computer company, will give it a useful ally in its efforts to

become the standard-setter for the emerging technology of reduced instruction set computing (Risc).

The technology simplifies computer processors, allowing them to run faster and is widely used in desktop workstations, the fastest-growing part of the computer market.

IBM faces fierce competition in this area from Hewlett Packard and Sun Microsystems, over which Risc systems will become the industry standard.

EC steps in

The European Commission wants to give online computer databases throughout the EC copyright protection for ten years by standardising with the sort of protection for systems now used in Denmark and other Scandinavian nations.

The commission is proposing protection not only for written texts but also for statistics, catalogues and other tabulations not yet covered by existing copyright law in many community countries.

The commission says that electronic databases are the library hypermarkets of the future. The databases will contain factual data, as well as literary and other artistic works, which are already protected against illegal copying.

Call for entries to the 1993 Toshiba Year of Invention

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Learning more about Europe

By Sally Watts

WHAT is most helpful for small businesses needing to learn more about trading in the single European market? Some possibilities are lunch clubs, workshops and seminars, newsletters and advice via a central phone-in. The question was explored in a recent survey of more than 1,000 Surrey firms before the launch of a service to help small businesses in the area come to terms with the challenges of the single market.

A phone-in service proved a popular idea, aimed at giving advisers where possible and, where not, pointing small business owners to sources of advice. Short, early-evening seminars were also favoured.

Both services will be introduced when an "Impact Europe" project starts up at Epsom on February 11. Wendy Gill, the project manager, said: "Probably, 90 per cent of businesses in this area have fewer than 25 employees. Many don't know where to go for information. We want to create a friendly, local pop-in centre."

The survey was conducted by North East Surrey College of Technology. The new project, in partnership with Surrey University, will provide pickup Europe activities. Pickup, which means professional, industrial and commercial updating, was set up by the education department to sup-

port colleges offering services to business. Britain has some regional pickup Europe centres. The latest, Polytechnic South West, Plymouth, which is partnered by three other colleges, opened last autumn. It covers Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire.

More details: Impact Europe, Longmead Road, Epsom KT19 9BH; telephone: 081-394 3267. Pickup Europe, Polytechnic South West, Drake Circus, Plymouth PL4 8AA; telephone: 0752 232374.



"How is it that the less business there is the longer hours you have to work?"

The sweet taste of success

By Rodney Hobson

IMPORTING can be particularly difficult for newly formed small businesses, with barriers popping up at both ends of the line. Buckingham Candy, a confectionery company, demonstrates how these can be overcome. Buckingham, despite its name, is based in Harpenden, Hertfordshire.

The title was picked because it conveyed the image of a high-class product and not for geographical reasons. Juliana and Brian Goldenberg set up four years ago as wholesalers, importing American chocolates. Mrs Goldenberg is an American while her husband comes from Liverpool.

Mrs Goldenberg says: "I was just walking along thinking about lots of things and I suddenly got the idea of supplying something that was not available here."

The task was daunting. The £2.2 billion wholesale confectionery market in the UK is dominated by big players such as Nestlé, Mars and Cadbury. Neither of the Goldenbergs had experience in the product, in selling or importing. However, they felt there was a chance if the imports were high quality. The first problem was in persuading UK retailers to stock the chocolates.

Mrs Goldenberg says: "When we first started the retailers said 'What do we want American sweets for? They are low quality.' It was difficult to get into the first shop. Everyone wants to see your track record."

High levels of import duty were



Beating the barriers: Juliana and Brian Goldenberg of Buckingham Candy

another worry, but, as Mrs Goldenberg is American, she was able to secure an American export grant. In America, there was the difficulty of persuading manufacturers to deal with an unknown British company.

Mrs Goldenberg says: "They were reluctant to give credit to a foreign company. If we failed to make payments there would be the complication of international law. You need to have personal contact. We set up an American company

that my family helps to run. They consolidate orders, arrange shipments and see the suppliers. They pay individual bills over there in dollars and we make one big transfer of funds."

Despite the early barriers, the Goldenbergs have built up Buckingham to an annual turnover of more than £1 million. They buy from ten manufacturers, all producing high quality confectionery, and have more than 500 lines. They have also managed to gain

acceptance by big stores groups such as House of Fraser.

Mrs Goldenberg says: "We just went in and contacted the buyers. They are always looking for something new and when you break into that market everyone sees your product."

Buckingham now has a national network of sales agents, providing personal contact with retailers. It has outgrown its existing warehouse and will soon be moving to one three times as big.

BRIEFINGS

The contract catering industry is thriving despite the recession (Derek Harris writes). Contractors, typically supplying companies and other organisations, provided more than 650 million meals last year, a 7.5 per cent increase on the year before, according to the British Hospitality Association.

Contract caterers have been taking more market share — the number of outlets, at 10,400, is up nearly 11 per cent on the year. Turnover has risen 41 per cent over three years. Inroads have been made particularly among local authorities and at the Ministry of Defence. A noticeable trend is for contract caterers to diversify into other support services — cleaning, housekeeping, maintenance and laundry services.

□ In a survey by National Westminster Bank, six out of 10 property valuers forecast more light commercial property coming on the market in the next quarter. Most valuers thought prices would stay static or fall. Greater London and the South-West are expected to see the biggest price falls.

□ Business travellers are already finding Spain expensive in the run-up to Expo 92 in Seville, the Olympics in Barcelona and Madrid becoming European City of Culture. A survey by *Export Times* magazine shows that the average daily expenditure for a business traveller is £95 more in Madrid than in London.

EDITED BY DEREK HARRIS

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Fragrant Dawn can follow up

THERE is an excellent opportunity to glean hints for next month's National Hunt Festival by watching the Aldermaston Novices' Chase and the Stroud Green Hurdle at Newbury today.

From the former, Far Over Stray, Fragrant Dawn, Space Fair and Shamana have been entered for the Arkle Challenge Trophy while the entire field for the latter is engaged in the Daily Express Triumph Hurdle.

Fragrant Dawn, who won the valuable L'Oréal Hurdle on this track two years ago when he was trained by Jimmy Fitzgerald, can win the

Aldermaston Novices' Chase. He is my nap.

Now in the care of David Elsworth, Fragrant Dawn made an exciting start to his steeplechasing career at Kempton three weeks ago when he beat the consistent mare Deadly Charm by three-and-a-half lengths.

A talk with the gifted Whitbury trainer at Ascot on Wednesday left me in no doubt that Fragrant Dawn's polished display at Kempton did not take him by surprise, even though opposition that day also included Beech Road and Vazon Bay, who, along with Deadly Charm, were

this week will appreciate the scale of that achievement. However, I feel she will need to improve even on that run if she is to beat Fragrant Dawn on these terms.

Fragrant Dawn should be the first leg of a double for his both his trainer and jockey Paul Holley. They have a clear chance of landing the second division of the February National Hunt Novices' Hurdle with Hawthorn Blaze provided he runs and jumps as well as he did when he won at Lingfield before falling next time out at Ascot.

The first division can go to Ashford Copse, who was runner-up to the unbeaten Spinning at Kempton before Spinning won again at Sandown. The way that Ashford Copse has performed in both his races this season has suggested that this longer trip will be to his liking.

While Elsworth and Holley will also be entertaining hopes of winning the Stroud Green Hurdle with course and distance winner Du-harra, it goes against the grain to expect Nemo So Brave. His unbeaten record over hurdles was brought to an end at Chesham by Good Profile, who has since remained unbeaten.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT

1.50 REFLEX NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (€1,500; 2m) (18 runners)

1-14 BOLL WEED 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-6031 HANGOVER 25 (D) R. Lee 5-11-12. B. Dowling 5-11-12. 3-400 CRAZIER 17 (D) M. Smith 5-11-12. P. Leach 5-11-12. 4-00 GRINDLEY BROOK 25 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. M. McClellan 5-11-12. 5-0 KINGS RARITY 23 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. A. Webb 5-11-12. 6-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 7-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 8-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 9-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 10-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 11-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 12-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 13-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 14-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 15-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 16-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 17-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12. 18-000 MISTER HOBBER 25 (D) M. McClellan 5-11-12. G. Husband 5-11-12.

4.20 TRIAL RUN NOVICES HURDLE (€2,880; 2m 4f) (16)

1-411 MULLIGAN 21 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-353 FIDELITY 21 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-225 ANOTHER DYER 25 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-100F RELEASEE 15 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-642 BUDDINGTON 25 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-4015 MEADOWVALE 21 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-40P STIRRUP 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-10-6 CLARE LAD 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-365 REGAL ESTATE 13 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-2210 PURBECK DOVE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-422F FIRST CRACK 25 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-200F CHICKEN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 13-200F TITIAL 25 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 14-025 SHADOW RUN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 15-45-0 GIPSY HUNTER 42 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 16-45-0 GIPSY HUNTER 42 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

2.50 GREDINGTON LONG DISTANCE HANDICAP CHASE (€3,900; 3m 4f) (13)

1-213 SOONER STILL 37 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-112 PACO'S BOY 50 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-468 ROYAL BATTERY 22 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-4132 MISTER CHRISTIAN 15 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-32P PEMBRIDGE 21 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-10-4 BLUE DART 51 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-40P STIRRUP 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-10-6 CLARE LAD 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-365 REGAL ESTATE 13 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-2210 PURBECK DOVE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-422F FIRST CRACK 25 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-200F CHICKEN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 13-200F TITIAL 25 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 14-025 SHADOW RUN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 15-45-0 GIPSY HUNTER 42 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 16-45-0 GIPSY HUNTER 42 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

4.50 FILLES SLAY RIDE NATIONAL HUNT FLY (€1,020; 1m 4f) (16)

1-0 COLOUR POLICY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-DAWN CALL 51 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-DEEP DELIGHT 8 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-JUNO AWAY 4 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-LEATHAL PRINCE 3 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-MARAZAN 35 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-MYSTICAL STORM 35 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-0 PHILLIMAY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-0 PHILLIMAY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-0 PHILLIMAY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-0 PHILLIMAY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-0 PHILLIMAY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 13-0 PHILLIMAY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 14-0 PHILLIMAY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 15-0 PHILLIMAY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 16-0 PHILLIMAY 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

2.50 DEAD CERT NOVICES SELLING HURDLE (€1,165; 2m 4f) (10)

1-34-1 FLORET 37 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

3.20 GILBERT COTTON MEMORIAL HUNTER CHASE (Amateurs; €1,688; 3m) (12)

1-292 CLONROCK GAZETTE 314 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-140 HARLEY 307 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-110 HARTMAN 18 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

1.55 FRESCOBALDO, 2.25 SAY YOU WILL, 2.55 FALA, 3.25 HAND ON HEART, 3.55 SANDMOOR DENIM, 4.25 DAWN SUCCESS.

GOING: STANDARD SIS

DRAW: 8F-1M, LOW NUMBERS BEST

1.55 NEW BALDERTON CLAIMING STAKES (€2,382; 1m 3f) (13 runners)

1-63 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-231 FRESCOBALDO 14 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

2.25 LANGFORD APPRENTICE HANDICAP (€2,451; 6f) (16)

1-622 SALADAN KNIGHT 14 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

2.55 GAMSTON HANDICAP (€2,206; 2m) (6)

1-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

4.10 LEVY BOARD NOVICES HURDLE (€1,490; 2m) (18 runners)

1-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

4.20 LADBROKE HANDICAP HURDLE (€2,075; 3m 2f 160yd) (13 runners)

1-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

4.25 MANSFIELD HANDICAP (€2,578; 1m 4f) (18)

1-0344 DAWN SUCCESS 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-2020 MR WISHING WELL 14 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-535 OPENING OVERTURE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-022 CALFORTH 17 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-000 CALFORTH 17 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-000 CALFORTH 17 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-000 CALFORTH 17 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-000 CALFORTH 17 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-000 CALFORTH 17 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-000 CALFORTH 17 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-000 CALFORTH 17 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-000 CALFORTH 17 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

GOING: STANDARD SIS

DRAW: 8F-1M, LOW NUMBERS BEST

1.55 NEW BALDERTON CLAIMING STAKES (€2,382; 1m 3f) (13 runners)

1-63 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-231 FRESCOBALDO 14 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-005 LEMEREAU 9 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

2.25 LANGFORD APPRENTICE HANDICAP (€2,451; 6f) (16)

1-622 SALADAN KNIGHT 14 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-405 FLYING PROMISE 7 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

2.55 GAMSTON HANDICAP (€2,206; 2m) (6)

1-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

4.10 LEVY BOARD NOVICES HURDLE (€1,490; 2m) (18 runners)

1-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 9-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 10-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 11-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 12-110 HUSO 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12.

4.20 LADBROKE HANDICAP HURDLE (€2,075; 3m 2f 160yd) (13 runners)

1-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 2-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 3-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 4-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 5-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 6-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 7-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley 5-11-12. 8-4-2014 LADBROKE 20 (D) J. O'Shea 5-11-12. P. Holley



HEALTH
How did Churchill drink so much and survive?



LIFE & TIMES

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 7 1992



MOTORING
Why the Princess of Wales chose a Mercedes

Somerville girls

One of Oxford's last women's colleges is about to throw 113 years of peace and harmony out of its mullioned windows. Who dares to let the men in?

The Somerville girl has done well. She is forceful, independent and outspoken. But then she has much to live up to. She knows she may become a prime minister — Somerville uniquely boasts four (Mmes Thatcher, Gandhi, Bandaranaike and Meir) — a writer like Iris Murdoch, Rose Macaulay or Dorothy L. Sayers; a Nobel prize-winning scientist like Dorothy Hodgkin; she may turn out to be a Shirley Williams; a Dilys Powell, an Esther Rantzen; Somervillians all.

"If you met a Somerville girl," as Dr Mary Archer says, "you would know she would be seriously clever."

"I think Somerville made us all quite *unafraid*," says Victoria Glendinning in what must be described as ringing tones. "I've never met a Somerville girl who was afraid of the world."

So is this creature going to take men lying down? She is not. Would women of their spirit look on while "immature, obnoxious young men" sweep in and take half the places? Would Eleanor Rathbone MP, or the withering broadcaster Margherita Laski, or the BBC's matriarchal Grace Wyndham Goldie have allowed it?

There is certainly something about the air in Somerville. Its very name, called after Mary Somerville, the pioneering Victorian mathematician and astronomer, suggests a summery, villagey, feminine place, quite unsuitable for the male. And while other bastions have fallen — Girton, St Anne's, St Hugh's, Lady Margaret Hall — Somerville is not going to go without a fuss. Across its lawned quadrangle today, every window is festooned with red and black stickers: "Somervillians say NO." On Wednesday night, an emergency motion at the Oxford Union — "This House would keep men out of Somerville" — was carried unanimously, 512 ayes to 109 against.

Letters from Somervillians to the papers this week expressed shock and dismay, headlined, "A lesson in betrayal." What betrayal? There were two. First, whenever the college has been balloted, it has voted to cling steadfastly to its single-sex status, along with St Hilda's, which now becomes the very last. Secondly, this final capitulation was decided without consultation. The girls each received leaflets announcing a meeting with the principal last weekend, but by Monday the news of the decision was already public. The meeting on Monday was highly charged. Mrs Catherine Hughes, Somerville's principal, had to listen to eloquent and impassioned speeches from the floor. When Mrs Hughes departed, there was even a slow handclap.

closed doors. The facts are incontrovertible. Somerville has lost its cherished intellectual pre-eminence at the top of the Norrington table. Women's colleges all began to slide the moment King's College Cambridge decided to open its doors to women in 1969. The men's motives were plain: sheer altruism, of course, to increase women's opportunities. If they improved their standards thereby, that was luck. They knew the women's colleges were turning away women cleverer than some of their men: now they could plunder the supply.

Now the women's colleges are having to turn to male fellows, because there are simply not enough women in university posts. Also, a college reasonably wants to be its students' first choice, not to have to resort to the pool of bright but unplaced applicants.

But whatever Somerville's deliberations, the decision was "agonising" for the college. Dr Catherine Duncan-Jones, of the governing body, tells me so, and she has been a diehard against change for 25 years, until now. She is not in the least surprised that the girls are upset. "They are loyal to the institution and I share their feelings. They feel mistrustful, but they cannot know all our reasons. It was not a cruel and arbitrary decision. There was no ease or comfort in it. And it is nothing to do with liking or not liking men. But it is done. And although my heart isn't in it, my head is."

Dame Janet Vaughan, the former principal, was more unequivocal about it, declaring that the time had come. "I think it's very exciting," she said this week. Dame Janet, now 92 and long retired, is regarded with reverence by all Somervillians of the post-war decades.

One of them, the writer Margaret Forster, who was offered scholarships in history by both Oxford and Cambridge, says she chose Somerville because its whole ambience seemed to be permeated with Dame Janet's spirit: artistic, idiosyncratic, faintly bohemian. "At my interview, she sat in a sunny room filled with flowers and gave us a happy meal served in scallop shells."

Years later I watched her on television talking about her work in blood transfusion and the metabolism of radioactive isotopes and the treatment of pernicious anaemia, and being there at the liberation of Belsen, and it made me think: 'What have I done with my life?'

This is what women's colleges have, and what future generations will lose. A continuum of scholarly women, inspiring bright girls, who then inspire the next batch of bright girls. In 1894, Jane Kirkaldy was the first woman to



"Until the men's colleges have equal numbers of women, we must keep women's colleges, and all they stand for": Alice Walton (centre foreground) leads a protest

graduate in animal morphology. One of her last Somerville students was Dorothy Crowfoot (later Hodgkin). Among Dorothy Hodgkin's students was Margaret Thatcher, and so on. Dame Janet, born 1899, the niece of one of Somerville's founders, spans Somerville's entire history.

"She very much set the tone," Esther Rantzen says. "She was not terribly impressed by undergraduates who sat around or just socialised. She felt one should use every minute and use it well." One year, one of Esther's theatrical productions, involving a naked vestal virgin, was banned by the dean, a story that made all the tabloids. "Dame Janet did not mind a bit. The tickets sold out."

Somerville, although millions in the red, like all women's colleges, now boasts a splendid new Margaret Thatcher conference centre, endowed by its eponymous alumna. However, disaffected she was with Oxford university, she seems to retain her loyalty to Somerville. As soon as she arrived in 1943, "a plump, pale, solemn girl of 19", as the novelist Nina Bayden recalled her in the anthol-

ogy *My Oxford*, she joined the Conservative Club. Nina was shocked. She had joined the Labour Club herself, and told Margaret that people from their backgrounds, both grammar school girls on state scholarships, had been lucky to get into Oxford, and should not use their good fortune simply to join the ranks of the privileged. "I pointed out that the Labour Club, besides being on the side of the angels, was also more fun. All the really lively and interesting people were members."

Margaret smiled her pretty china doll's smile. Of course, she admitted, the Labour Club was more fashionable — a deadly word that immediately reduced my pretensions. Unlike me, she was not 'playing' at politics.

Other than its predilection for success, Somervillians are not truly a type. "Other people thought we were. But we were quite a mixture," says Victoria Glendinning. "One of our group joined a closed order of nuns. She took my copy of *Lolita*, and never gave it back."

The ethos of women's colleges can inspire a shudder — the image

of rows of women in tiny rooms huddled over mean gas fires, brewing cocoa — or a room-of-one's-own sense of freedom. Margaret Forster says of her Somerville scholar's room, with its mullioned windows overlooking cedared lawns, "I wanted that room more than I wanted anything out of the women's movement." But Glendinning married in her second year, to escape "the shrill shrieks of female voices in hall each evening, and the smell of stale talc. There can be something quite oppressive, as well as liberating, about the company of women."

But now she looks back with gratitude for the company of all those *startlingly* bright girls. "I went back recently to speak at high table and there were all these very old, noble faces, of women who had led incredibly worthwhile lives."

Somervillians want to cherish their history, and I can understand their feelings. When my college, Girton, — 10 years older than Somerville — first opened its doors to men, it seemed a recklessly generous move to us. We knew so well what a battle it had been to get a women's college founded in the teeth of male opposition. As M.C. Bradbrook, then mistress of Girton, said — rightly — "I know you feel amputated from your past."

she is relieved by the decision: the college would otherwise struggle as a beleaguered minority, preoccupied with defending its status. Esther Rantzen agrees. She cannot imagine her daughter applying to a "quaint" women-only college. As for tales of sexual aggression, she says, the thing to

do is to invite men in to Somerville and show them how to behave.

Older Somervillians may not forgive their college. They will back Alice Walton and her contemporaries in a just and noble cause. But I fear it may be another of Oxford's lost ones.

Oxford men, page 5

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Spirits of Somerville: (from left) Dame Janet Vaughan; Dame Iris Murdoch and Margaret Thatcher



The teachers and the taught: (from left) Esther Rantzen, Dr Mary Archer and Margaret Forster

SPRING LOADED: The arrival celebration of contemporary British dance gets underway with a programme featuring a new piece by Stephen Segal, a performance of the acclaimed *Shock Absorber* by Phoenix Dance Company, together with new works by Michael Popper, and Christopher Stille & Suzi Stille. The season begins at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and continues at The Place from April 11.

SWAN LAKE: Following the success of its new *Romeo and Juliet*, Northern Ballet Theatre has come up with a new production of *Swan Lake*. Choreographed by Dennis Wayne and designed by Lee Brotherton, the production is directed by Christopher Gable, who has a fine eye for dramatic detail. *Swan Lake* receives its world premiere in Leeds, before moving to Blackpool on February 18.

BROADWAY TO BEKESLEY: The new musical *Beckesley* is a programme of music inspired by the musicals of the Twenties and Thirties. His band features cornetist Digby Fothergill, saxophonist Randolph Cobble and guitarist Paul Steady. *Beckesley* is at the Place from SE1 017-828 8800, tonight, 7.30pm.

ERIC CLAPTON: The veteran rocker continues his road with tracks from his recent live album, *24 Nights*, and with a new album *Eric Clapton*. He begins an extensive tour at the Albert Hall from Wednesday.

ANGEL'S IN AMERICA: Strong performances in Tony Kushner's tough but vigorous drama: AIDS, religion, politics, everything. *Angel's in America*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 2252, tonight, tomorrow, 7.30pm, 21.00mins.

BECKETT: Reviving performances from David Ikin and Robert Lindsay in *Beckett's* play on the relationship between Thomas & Beckett and Henry II. *Beckett*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

THE CABINET MINISTER: Derek Nimmo and Maureen Lipman in a snub, largely unfunny *Play* comedy. *The Cabinet Minister*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

THE COTTON CLUB: An impression of the Harlem nightclub: light on energy, low on stock. *The Cotton Club*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

DANCING AT LUSHNASHA: Brian Friel's *Older* and *Widow* in a new play, set in 1950s Donegal. *Dancing at Lushnasha*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

FAITH HEALER: Striding performance in Brian Friel's *very* play (four monologues) exploring a healer's dark and idiosyncratic powers. *Faith Healer*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

GOOD ROCKIN' TONITE: Set in a 1950s *Rock* club. *Good Rockin' Tonight*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

AN EVENING WITH GARY LINEKER: Sometimes that look at the fantasies of a woman married to a soccer star. *An Evening with Gary Lineker*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

SOPIHASTIC LADIES: Twelve single-dancers wild through the music of Duke Ellington. *Sophisticated Ladies*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

BOUDU SAVED FROM DROWNING: (P2): Welcome back to the *Beckett* series. *Boudou Saved from Drowning*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

COUPE DE VILLE (12): Three winning brothers travel overseas in a 1954 Cadillac. *Coupe de Ville*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

LES VALSEUSES (18): Gerard Depardieu and Patrick Dewaere in 1974, as two men with the heart of a lion. *Les Valseuses*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

DELICATESSEN (15): French video wizard Jean-Luc Godard's *Delicatessen*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

DOUBLE IMPACT (18): Jean-Claude Van Damme, the "muscles from Brussels", as two men brothers fighting wrong in Hong Kong. *Double Impact*, South Bank, SE1 017-828 8800, Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, mat, Wed, Sat, 3pm, 15mins.

FRANKIE AND JOHNNY (15): Short-order cook (Al Pacino) courts a

WEEKEND EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kari Knight

BOURNEMOUTH SINFONETTA: The remarkable percussionist Evelyn Glennie, deaf since the age of 12, is the soloist in a Contemporary Music Network tour of Dominic Mulrow's new *Percussion Concerto*. James MacMillan's equally new *Tryst*, MacMillan's *Dances* and *Concertos* and Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony*. Arts Centre, University of Warwick, Coventry (CV4 7AL), tomorrow, 7.30pm. Tickets: 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 110, 115, 120, 125, 130, 135, 140, 145, 150, 155, 160, 165, 170, 175, 180, 185, 190, 195, 200, 205, 210, 215, 220, 225, 230, 235, 240, 245, 250, 255, 260, 265, 270, 275, 280, 285, 290, 295, 300, 305, 310, 315, 320, 325, 330, 335, 340, 345, 350, 355, 360, 365, 370, 375, 380, 385, 390, 395, 400, 405, 410, 415, 420, 425, 430, 435, 440, 445, 450, 455, 460, 465, 470, 475, 480, 485, 490, 495, 500, 505, 510, 515, 520, 525, 530, 535, 540, 545, 550, 555, 560, 565, 570, 575, 580, 585, 590, 595, 600, 605, 610, 615, 620, 625, 630, 635, 640, 645, 650, 655, 660, 665, 670, 675, 680, 685, 690, 695, 700, 705, 710, 715, 720, 725, 730, 735, 740, 745, 750, 755, 760, 765, 770, 775, 780, 785, 790, 795, 800, 805, 810, 815, 820, 825, 830, 835, 840, 845, 850, 855, 860, 865, 870, 875, 880, 885, 890, 895, 900, 905, 910, 915, 920, 925, 930, 935, 940, 945, 950, 955, 960, 965, 970, 975, 980, 985, 990, 995, 1000.

LES NEGRESSSES VERTES: Following their recent success as the first foreign band to play in Beirut for over a decade, the group are back on these shores showing influences more diverse than ever. *Les Negresses Vertes*, Arts Centre, University of Warwick, Coventry (CV4 7AL), tomorrow, 7.30pm. Tickets: 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 110, 115, 120, 125, 130, 135, 140, 145, 150, 155, 160, 165, 170, 175, 180, 185, 190, 195, 200, 205, 210, 215, 220, 225, 230, 235, 240, 245, 250, 255, 260, 265, 270, 275, 280, 285, 290, 295, 300, 305, 310, 315, 320, 325, 330, 335, 340, 345, 350, 355, 360, 365, 370, 375, 380, 385, 390, 395, 400, 405, 410, 415, 420, 425, 430, 435, 440, 445, 450, 455, 460, 465, 470, 475, 480, 485, 490, 495, 500, 505, 510, 515, 520, 525, 530, 535, 540, 545, 550, 555, 560, 565, 570, 575, 580, 585, 590, 595, 600, 605, 610, 615, 620, 625, 630, 635, 640, 645, 650, 655, 660, 665, 670, 675, 680, 685, 690, 695, 700, 705, 710, 715, 720, 725, 730, 735, 740, 745, 750, 755, 760, 765, 770, 775, 780, 785, 790, 795, 800, 805, 810, 815, 820, 825, 830, 835, 840, 845, 850, 855, 860, 865, 870, 875, 880, 885, 890, 895, 900, 905, 910, 915, 920, 925, 930, 935, 940, 945, 950, 955, 960, 965, 970, 975, 980, 985, 990, 995, 1000.

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of current theatre in London

■ House full, returns only

■ Some seats available

■ Seats at all prices

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A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kari Knight

BOURNEMOUTH SINFONETTA: The remarkable percussionist Evelyn Glennie, deaf since the age of 12, is the soloist in a Contemporary Music Network tour of Dominic Mulrow's new *Percussion Concerto*. James MacMillan's equally new *Tryst*, MacMillan's *Dances* and *Concertos* and Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony*. Arts Centre, University of Warwick, Coventry (CV4 7AL), tomorrow, 7.30pm. Tickets: 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 110, 115, 120, 125, 130, 135, 140, 145, 150, 155, 160, 165, 170, 175, 180, 185, 190, 195, 200, 205, 210, 215, 220, 225, 230, 235, 240, 245, 250, 255, 260, 265, 270, 275, 280, 285, 290, 295, 300, 305, 310, 315, 320, 325, 330, 335, 340, 345, 350, 355, 360, 365, 370, 375, 380, 385, 390, 395, 400, 405, 410, 415, 420, 425, 430, 435, 440, 445, 450, 455, 460, 465, 470, 475, 480, 485, 490, 495, 500, 505, 510, 515, 520, 525, 530, 535, 540, 545, 550, 555, 560, 565, 570, 575, 580, 585, 590, 595, 600, 605, 610, 615, 620, 625, 630, 635, 640, 645, 650, 655, 660, 665, 670, 675, 680, 685, 690, 695, 700, 705, 710, 715, 720, 725, 730, 735, 740, 745, 750, 755, 760, 765, 770, 775, 780, 785, 790, 795, 800, 805, 810, 815, 820, 825, 830, 835, 840, 845, 850, 855, 860, 865, 870, 875, 880, 885, 890, 895, 900, 905, 910, 915, 920, 925, 930, 935, 940, 945, 950, 955, 960, 965, 970, 975, 980, 985, 990, 995, 1000.

LES NEGRESSSES VERTES: Following their recent success as the first foreign band to play in Beirut for over a decade, the group are back on these shores showing influences more diverse than ever. *Les Negresses Vertes*, Arts Centre, University of Warwick, Coventry (CV4 7AL), tomorrow, 7.30pm. Tickets: 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 110, 115, 120, 125, 130, 135, 140, 145, 150, 155, 160, 165, 170, 175, 180, 185, 190, 195, 200, 205, 210, 215, 220, 225, 230, 235, 240, 245, 250, 255, 260, 265, 270, 275, 280, 285, 290, 295, 300, 305, 310, 315, 320, 325, 330, 335, 340, 345, 350, 355, 360, 365, 370, 375, 380, 385, 390, 395, 400, 405, 410, 415, 420, 425, 430, 435, 440, 445, 450, 455, 460, 465, 470, 475, 480, 485, 490, 495, 500, 505, 510, 515, 520, 525, 530, 535, 540, 545, 550, 555, 560, 565, 570, 575, 580, 585, 590, 595, 600, 605, 610, 615, 620, 625, 630, 635, 640, 645, 650, 655, 660, 665, 670, 675, 680, 685, 690, 695, 700, 705, 710, 715, 720, 725, 730, 735, 740, 745, 750, 755, 760, 765, 770, 775, 780, 785, 790, 795, 800, 805, 810, 815, 820, 825, 830, 835, 840, 845, 850, 855, 860, 865, 870, 875, 880, 885, 890, 895, 900, 905, 910, 915, 920, 925, 930, 935, 940, 945, 950, 955, 960, 965, 970, 975, 980, 985, 990, 995, 1000.

THEATRE GUIDE

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Reinvention of a cold seducer

OPERA

Don Giovanni
Covent Garden

GIVEN the way that *Figaro* and *Costi* have passed across this stage under his hands, nobody can have expected the *Don Giovanni* that completes Johannes Schaefer's Mozart-da-Ponte threesome to stake out the work's claims as opera buffa. No, the feeling is big, black, oppressive and cold, cold. The only laughter of the evening comes from Don Giovanni—a sudden, powerful reinvention of the part for himself as Thomas Allen—and it is a harsh, cruel mockery directed at all the Leporellos of this world who expect to be snug.

The aura of the production owes a lot to Peter Pabst's sets, which have a lot of beautifully projected sky on a great panel up above, but which are dominated by high, black and featureless walls. Black is the main colour of the costumes, too, with all the gentry looking like anxious courtiers of the Spanish Hapsburgs, so that the tumble of creams, azures and browns with the arrival of the peasants is a very welcome breath of life. Many different configurations of the walls are possible (though the technical side of the production was a bit rough on the opening night, none more effective than the narrow channelling of entrances and exits straight down the middle of the stage in the garden scene towards the end of the first act. The arrival of Giovanni and his bevy of long-haired minions at the same ones who

are to make good his escape in the next scene) is a particularly powerful moment in a production lean in dramatic braggadocio.

Most of the "ideas" similarly depend on extras. A female servant hangs around the spot where the Commendatore was killed (a nude stabbing by this corner of human hopes and pretensions, not a duet, bringing flowers and kneeling in prayer, and it is to her that Elvira goes for consolation at the end of Leporello's catalogue aria.

Rather similarly, Donna Anna has a confidante to whom, more than to Ottavio, she addresses "Non mi dir". But the touch of female fellowship is weak without support in the music.

There is also something ill-fitting about the collection of human statues in the cemetery (one is just amazed that they can all stand so still, which is not really the point of the scene), and about the nude young lady gracing Giovanni's supper table: the piece is about seduction and conquest, not having it put in front of you on a plate.

Much is said about the complete mess of Allen's portrayal by the fact that his Giovanni is here for once unseated and confused, or seems unsettled and confused, bothered by an irrelevance. It is remarkable to hear this singer creating a character so bleak and menacing, finding the voice for such a chill and chilling soul. The man is a kind of insatiable zealot. He knows hell before he gets there.

When there are so many Glyndebourne regulars on stage—and of course in the pit, where Bernard Haitink conducts a performance full of demonic drive, incisive points of detail, and many moments

THE attention span of the average New York audience these days seems hardly longer than the duration of Andrew Lloyd Webber's song "Memory"; so there was something heretically foolhardy in the gamble the composer took on Broadway last year. After all, who could expect a buzz at the box office for two-and-a-half hours of pastiche Molière in rhymed couplets, starting with a half-hour monologue and ending on a decidedly grim, downbeat note? No wonder *La Bête* collapsed, and Webber and his associates lost the \$2 million the play cost to stage.

Still, he remained as undaunted as the plucky puffer in his *Starlight Express*. Here is David Hirsch's play on this side of the Atlantic, still with Webber money in it, still directed by Richard Jones; and all his instincts, if not all his brains, wish it well.

At times it is as if the poet Tony Harrison, whose *Misanthropy* was his wittiest translation I know, had

A passable pastiche

THEATRE

La Bête
Lyric, Hammersmith

discovered a new Molière comedy and stylishly updated the language. At other times—well, let's admit that the play is not up to the best standards of an era when comedy, clarity and the neo-classical virtues held sway.

Molière himself is the hero, grudgingly disguised by the anagram his enemies used, Elomire, and played with furious zeal by Jeremy Northam. Picture his dismay when his company's patron, Timothy Walker, the Prince of Wales, insists that one Valère becomes Muir to his *Nordpols*, *Gallon* to his *Simpson*.

Galling Romans

THEATRE

Caesar and Cleopatra
Greenwich

"MY STORIES are the old stories," Shaw once said, "my stage tricks and suspense and thrills and jests are the ones in vogue when I was a boy." This is often evident in *Caesar and Cleopatra*, with its conspiracies, secret signals, death-defying escapes, and last-minute rescues. It is an exotic melodrama that has been recycled in the Shavian truth-factory: an old story, annexed for the new ideas its author wished to propagate.

Not that you would guess so from Matthew Francis's production, which neutralises most of the play's fun and excitement. The famous opening, in which Caesar encounters Cleopatra in the desert moonlight, loses its magic by occurring in what appears to be the Sainsbury family's latest gift to the nation. Thanks to this museum-like setting, the atmosphere remains cold, and is not enlivened by 19th-century uniforms that can have seen action only in the local dry-cleaners. Alec McCowen's Caesar, with his preposterous gold beard, might be an upmarket cinema commissioner.

Import of no import

DANCE

Ballet du Nord
Sadler's Wells

I WISH I could write more warmly about this fringe company. I keep telling myself that we shall be entitled to be snuffy about it when a town such as Maidstone has its own ballet company. Whereas the British idea of a regional arts policy is to transplant existing companies, the French government and local authorities found the money nine years ago to set up a new company, primarily to serve northern France.

Noticing that the Channel was not far from its home, the company has been several times to various towns in Britain, and this week is at last showing its wares in London. Unfortunately, it earns only lukewarm commendation.

The one work completely new to Sadler's Wells is a staging of Mozart's *Requiem* by Jean-Paul Comelin, who took over as director last year. The City of London Choir, packed beneath the stage at the back of the orchestra pit, tackle the music with spirit: a scratch group of solo singers work with variable success; and the

by tripping onstage in breastplate and skirt, a blend of Maucalulay's Horatio and Cinderella's evil sister. Nor are the artistic issues as well defined as they might be, given an onstage patron who, at one moment appears to have dabbled in the advanced deconstructionist critics, and the next seems just a philistine idiot.

Richard Hudson's set, a stately room whose geometry is 45 degrees askew, and the Alice-in-Wonderland asking of some of Jones's cast do not altogether help. The sharpest Molière productions tend to be realistic, understated, not to signal their characters' eccentricities with outrageous costumes, camp gestures and silly walks. Nevertheless, neither the play nor the production remotely deserved the billing they took on Broadway. London should give them a qualified welcome.

BENED

Intensity tinged with compassion

GALLERIES

Richard Cork
reviews a
retrospective of
the work of
Lucian Freud at
the Tate Gallery
in Liverpool

Although Lucian Freud only makes rare appearances in the work he produces, his presence as the relentless observer is impossible to ignore. Throughout the retrospective survey at the Tate Gallery, Liverpool, which spans half a century of unrelenting activity, Freud's gaze usually remains laser-eyed. Once he has settled on the object of his scrutiny, nothing deflects him from investigating the forms with the zealous precision of a detective.

Freud's style has changed, along with the people who submit themselves to his protracted stare. But the intensity of his hard, single-minded probing is manifested even in the most youthful section of the show.

Among the early drawings, an ink and crayon self-portrait encloses his 25-year-old features in contours sleek enough to vie with Botticelli. His hair rises in chiselled tendrils from a face dominated by large, glacial eyes. This is a man already bent on rejecting lazy or sentimental looking in favour of a rigorous alternative.

He had no qualms, during the same period, about defining the rotund features of a dead puffin with as much care as his living subjects received. The open-beaked bird must have been a disquieting companion as it lay before him, half-wrapped in a blanket. But Freud insisted on lingering over his decomposed motif, specifying the minutiae of the puffin's broken body with meticulous clarity.

There was a moment, in the second world war, when Freud strayed from the primacy of observation and flirted with Surrealism. In a startlingly untypical picture called *The Painter's Room*, an outsize zebra swathed in red and yellow stripes thrusts his head through the window. But the animal seems merely theatrical compared with the sustained emphasis, in the pictures hanging nearby, on appraising the thing seen. Freud must quickly have found this goal so absorbing that he had no further need to resort to fantasy.

The act of painting a girl with a kitten yielded an image far stranger and more unsettling than any amount of bizarre, dream-like concoctions.



Brushwork committed to minuscule exactitude: Lucian Freud's *Girl with a White Dog*, 1950-1951, now in Liverpool. Courtesy of the trustees of the Tate Gallery.

Her eyes are painted with a scrupulousity so fierce that windows can be seen, reflected in her odd bulbous pupils.

The strands of her dark hair, specified as painstakingly as the most microscopic Pre-Raphaelite portrait, bristle with the same disquiet that her face discloses. In the hand holding the kitten up in front of her, the fingers close round the animal's throat with menacing rigidity.

For a while, in the early Fifties, Freud moves away from this mood of frozen expectancy and grows more sensuous. The advent of a freckled, flaxen-haired girl inspires the most tender paintings on view here.

He no longer feels impelled, as in an earlier portrait of the dark-haired model, to expose a pale breast and juxtapose it with the dog lying in her lap. The sinner savours her untroubled features with brushwork less

committed to minuscule exactitude.

As the Fifties came to a close, painters everywhere responded to the challenge thrown down by the impulsive, muscular and free-wheeling strategies of the new American painting. Freud had no intention of following the Abstract Expressionists in their willingness to jettison representational references. But, like his close friend Francis Bacon, he took what he needed from the audacity of the New York avant-garde.

His mark-making becomes looser, emancipated at last from the glassy finish of the previous period. The need for a more convulsive and pugnacious approach culminates in the mighty *Sleeping Head* of 1962, where the woman's flesh seems to have been pummeled into submission by Freud's belligerent brush. A price, however, had to be paid for this new expansive-

ness. As Freud grew wilder, so he risked losing sight of the tension which gave his finest earlier works their piercing fascination. He looks puzzled in a freely handled self-portrait of 1963, where his head is propped up by a jutting hand and his eyes, for once, are narrowed and weary.

Dissatisfied with the search for a more unbridled approach, Freud began to develop a greater caution in his way with paint. The outcome, at first, was timid.

A small 1967 canvas of fern spreading fuzzily outwards from a pot is the weakest painting in the show. Freud has always needed an engagement with the human figure to bring out his most potent qualities.

In the same year, he turned his attention to a naked girl asleep on a sheet. Almost filling three sides of the picture, this lightly brushed ground allows her to float on its surface. At the same time, though, Freud treats her body with a far from dreamy

realism. Pubic hair and genitalia are defined with far greater frankness than before, and he shows an uncanny ability to see through the skin and disclose the veins and blood beneath.

The more Freud concentrated on naked figures, the more vulnerable they grew. Offering a corrective to stereotyped ideas about the automatic eroticism of the female nude, these powerful paintings stress isolation and apprehension instead.

In one forceful *Naked Portrait*, the model appears marooned on a mattress. While one leg is hunched up in a foetal position, the other curves round the base of the bed. Freud himself cannot be seen, but she seems acutely aware of his proximity. Indeed, the foreground is dominated by a paint-spattered stool where brushes, palette knife and mixing bowl all testify to the artist's presiding presence.

By no means all the images now stress loneliness. Two

nudes occupy the bed in *Annie and Alice*, smuggling together for warmth as one places a consoling hand on the other's pregnant belly.

But the latter still looks anxious, and Freud is never afraid to reveal sagging flesh, blotches, birthmarks and all the other blemishes which distinguish real female bodies from their idealised air-brushed counterparts in pin-up imagery. His women are capable of experiencing pain as well as delight, and sometimes their bodies match the ungainliness of the worn-out, bursting sofas where they rest their formidable bulk.

Men are treated with an equal amount of directness. In one arresting canvas, a male nude sprawls on a bed with his hand shielding his eyes. A black sock, trailing from the tip of his foot, echoes the curve of his exposed penis.

In the uncompromising world of Freud's maturity,

where people are surrounded by bare floorboards, exposed plumbing, crudely plastered walls and a rudimentary sink, everyone seems conscious of mortality. His mother, arrayed in white, stretches out on a black bed-sheet as though suicidally awaiting her death. But the crisp vigour with which these figures are depicted prevents his work from becoming morbid.

Standing by the Rags is the title of a magnificent recent canvas, where the female nude looks weary enough to fall against the linen scraps heaped behind her. But Freud's increasingly encrusted pigment, deployed with magisterial eloquence, ensures that she is buoyed up by an innate resilience. The will to endure remains inextinguishable, lending her and the rest of this exhibition an obstinate sense of grandeur.

Lucian Freud at the Tate Gallery, Liverpool (051-709 3223) Wed-Sun 10am-6pm; Tues 11am-6pm; Closed Mon. Until March 22.

CRITICS' CHOICE

● **ROTHENSTEIN'S BOXES**: Best known as a print-maker, Michael Rothenstein has, over the last 30 years, made a long series of box-constructing often thematically related to his prints. Few have been exhibited, but now comes a retrospective of more than 100. At the same time, there is a show in St James's of his prints from the Seventies.

Rothenstein's Boxes. Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, W1 (071-439 7438) Daily 10am-6pm, until March 5. Admission £2, concessions £1. Images and Themes. Peter Nahum, 5 Ryder Street, SW1 (071-930 6059) Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm, until March 13.

● **F.E. McWILLIAM**: One of the few still-active survivors from the Slade in the era of Tonks, McWilliam has never entirely shed the Surrealist influence from the Thirties. His new wooden sculptures retain a Surrealist interest in the arbitrary effects of tree shape and grain. Also works by Grace Pailthorpe and Reuben Mednikoff, included in the International Surrealist Exhibition of 1936. Mayor Gallery, 22a Cork Street, W1 (071-734 3558) Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sat 10am-1pm, until March 20.

● **ROBYN DENNY**: Denny was a golden boy of the Sixties, given his own retrospective at the Tate in 1973, when he was only 43. Since then his hard-edged abstractions have fallen out of favour. This new show indicates a gradual softening of edges and flexibility of forms. Bernard Jacobson Gallery, 14a Gifford Street, London W1 (071-495 8575). Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-1pm. Until February 29.

● **BARCLAYS YOUNG ARTISTS AWARD**: In previous years the show has offered useful pointers to what is going on at art schools. The judges this year were Mel Gooding, John McEwen and Bruce McLean. The nine artists shortlisted seem interested in installations and found objects, rather than traditional painting and sculpture. Andrew Kearney took the award with *Untitled 1991*, a fortress of concrete and steel. Serpentine Gallery, Kensington Gardens, London W2 (071-402 6075). Daily, 10am-6pm. Until March 8.

● **ALAN DAVIE**: Claims that Davie is Scotland's "greatest living artist" are arguable, but this retrospective of more than 100 works from the Thirties right up to date is a timely and desirable exercise. Emphasis is on the variety of Davie's activities and interests and the way they are reflected in the painted images. McEwan Galleries, 270 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow (041-331 1854). Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm, Sun, noon-6pm, until March 22.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

TELEVISION REVIEW

Monarch of the lens

In the good old days of widespread scrofula, the forefathers of our Queen held the reputation of dispensing miraculous cures. Any subject afflicted by these nasty glandular swellings could probably make an appointment for a royal laying on of hands, with no questions asked. Even the scruffy infant Samuel Johnson, for example, was "touched" by Queen Anne.

Those days are passed, of course. Yet there were moments during last night's highly entertaining *Elizabeth R* (BBC1) when one hoped the tradition could be revived, if only to see the Queen's reaction. "And you will see on the schedule. Ma'am, that after you launch the ship and unveil the plaques you will touch some people with scrofula." The Queen, one fancies, would do an almost undetectable double-take, then purse her lips, think hard, and say brightly: "That will be interesting."

The idea of *Elizabeth R*

was to show the monarch at work—perhaps to impress on us the burden of office. Here she was, fulfilling all sorts of official roles: hosting summit parties, doing walkabouts, visiting the United States, presenting colours, making Christmas broadcasts.

But nobody will have watched the film for news of the Queen's constitutional role. No, we watched because it is endlessly fascinating to study the Queen's face and body language—much as one studies the face of Buster Keaton—for its tiniest variations. Isn't that what we do when we see her on the news, sitting expressionless in foreign parts while natives (in the words of Victoria Wood) waggle their doo-dahs at her?

Here is a person who has been trained from birth not to

offend, not to express opinions. Lech Walesa comes on a state visit to Windsor Castle, and the Queen prepares her family to meet him. "He seems amazed by the size of everything," she reports, quite animatedly. "He only has two English words, and they are, erm, quite interesting words." Evidently she doesn't want to tell the world that Lech Walesa says "What a whopper!" all the time.

In his play *A Question of Attribution* (shown last autumn) Alan Bennett suggested that the Queen lives in a world of facts. "Not chat," insisted Prunella Scales as the Queen; "Give me facts." But the lesson of *Elizabeth R* was that the Queen would probably enjoy a chat—with her portrait-painter, for example—but that people are unac-

countably nervous in her company. So it is down to the Queen to think of a polite question, to get the ball rolling. And it seems to be an uphill task. One begins to appreciate, seeing the Queen momentarily stumped, that in the repertoire of possible conversation-starters, the old chestnut "Have you come far?" is something of an all-time gem.

The deft good humour of *Elizabeth R* was its great appeal. It was surprisingly easy to forget the big "issues", such as "How far did the Palace control all this?" and "How dare they manipulate the populace into liking the Queen?", when confronted with the amazing sight of three Windsor Castle footmen carefully polishing a mahogany table 160 feet

long, one of them actually standing on the brilliantly reflecting surface with dusters tied around his feet.

Conversations and images are what will be remembered from this film: the Queen posing for her portrait beside a window in Buckingham Palace appearing at a diplomatic reception and declaring "Oh look, we're all in blue; something wrong there", and administering the coup de grace to a conversation about diary-keeping. "Do you keep it in your own hand?" she is asked. "I can't write any other way," she says, baffled by the question.

The best moment was when she pocketed her winnings from the Derby sweepstake. She put the sixteen quid into her pocket with the air of someone thinking, "Now I can get that handbag from Dolcis in the morning."

LYNNE TRUSS

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CONCERTO FOR THE VIOLA SECTION

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Ann Steele became a paid attendant to the elderly and considers the pitfalls of providing, and purchasing, private care

An aged handful for the hired help

A sharp rap on the door just before 7am on a chilly Monday startles me out of a deep sleep. An imperious voice booms: "Good morning," and the bedroom door is swung open.

I soon get to learn as the week drags to its miserable end that this is not a friendly greeting but a summons which really means: "Get up. We are waiting for our morning tea."

With some trepidation I get out of bed to start my first day as a housekeeper-cook-carer for an autistic couple living in luxury in an isolated manor house set in its own grounds in rural Leicestershire.

When I decided to join the ranks of the poorly paid army of private carers whose efforts and patience enable old people to remain in their own homes, I had no idea what I was in for. Life below stairs in the 1990s is still startlingly anachronistic. I could almost have been playing a bit role in *Upstairs, Downstairs* and after my first day in service I was tempted to walk out.

To be fair, it was only this first experience that was unnerving. The elderly couple still lived as though they were running a household of servants. My week seemed like a month. I was only spoken to when strictly necessary, rarely received a "please" or "thank you" and on one memorable occasion was nearly reduced to tears by the master of the house.

My investigations into the role of private home carers are particularly relevant in the light of the recent death just before Christmas of a 66-year-old wheelchair-bound London woman. The carer who was providing live-in help for the victim, through Care Alternatives, a Wimbledon agency, has been charged with murder. Lucianne Sawyer, the director, says that people should not be alarmed. "We cannot totally eliminate risk but, after all, we have looked after 9,000 clients without incident."

She started the agency ten years ago and follows the UK HomeCare Association code of recruiting practice. "Because we have already got a strict recruitment policy, it's very difficult to do a lot more," she says. "We would like to be able to get police checks on our care assistants but at present this is only available for the people employing carers who look after children."

Her business had not been adversely affected, Ms Sawyer says. "Our recruitment policy and procedure is extremely thorough and we have an excellent reputation." However, following the incident the agency last week



With due care and attention: Lucianne Sawyer, whose agency provides live-in help for the elderly, is introducing more stringent checks on "carers"

decided to instigate two new procedures. Whenever geographically possible it will be visiting care attendants during the first week of live-in jobs. (The agency always telephones its live-in care attendants within the first day or two as a matter of course.)

In addition, Ms Sawyer says she will personally undertake spot checks on references of existing care attendants.

Care Alternatives, in common with the other reputable firms among the 400 to 500 private agencies in the country, always asks for two written references — if possible one from an employer — and also likes to talk to the referees on the telephone. But some of those attracted to the work do not have former employers. "A lot of

our staff come from Australia and New Zealand and we always fax their countries to take up references overseas," Ms Sawyer says. All home care agencies have to be licensed by the employment department, which Ms Sawyer says does "a certain amount of checking" on premises and how agencies operate. They sometimes, she says, look at references and visit about once a year.

To find out what the job entails, I selected agencies from among the dozens of advertisements in *The Lady* with attractive names such as Aunt Jessica Care, Help At Hand, Newbury Nannies, Rocking Horse and so on.

I explained in my letter that I had no previous experience of taking care of the elderly, apart

Life below stairs in the 1990s is still startlingly anachronistic. I could almost have been in *Upstairs, Downstairs*. After my first day in service I was tempted to walk out

from now and then looking after elderly relatives and neighbours, but that I had brought up my own family. I didn't expect such prompt replies.

One or two telephoned almost immediately. I had to fill in application forms and supply two references from people who had

known me a long time. They were required to write back. I don't know whether they were telephoned. One agency wanted a photograph, several specified non-smokers and drivers were welcomed. I chose three agencies and went along for interviews and was offered work by two of them. Only

one asked me to attend a day induction course.

I joined half a dozen other women of varying ages to learn something about coping with the demands of the elderly. One question asked was what we would do if arriving one morning for day duty, having said goodbye to the night staff, we found the elderly client had passed away in bed.

The group looked nervously around at each other for inspiration. Some said they would telephone the GP, others that they would ring the next of kin. None of us suggested calling the police or dialling 999 for an ambulance. I was surprised that the need for first aid training was not mentioned by our tutor. (The British Nurses' Association, which also

supplies carers, as well as nurses, insists that its care attendants take their first aid two-day course. Carers have to foot the bill themselves.)

Our tutor warned us not to take our charges out in our own cars for insurance reasons, always to give a receipt if we took money for shopping ("elderly people can get incredibly forgetful and confused over money"). We were advised to take out indemnity insurance in respect of claims for breach of professional duty.

On my first assignment, a "live-in", the duties were hardly arduous (pay £30 a day). I prepared breakfast, lunch and supper and did a little housework. Each week the couple had exactly the same undemanding menu. There was what was described as a "heavy shopping lady", a reference to the provisions she bought, not her size. I was scheduled to do "light housework and make the beds". I was not entirely sad to leave.

Excluding the vast numbers of paid carers employed through local authorities and privately, there are six million people in Britain today looking after a relative at home. By the year 2000 predictions are that there will be more people caring for an elderly relative than a young child.

Crossroads Care provides temporary care relief for those looking after relatives in their homes. It is the largest agency of its kind, employing 2,000 attendants to help 18,000 families every year. Ian Cross, the director, stresses the importance attached to training and good management.

Not all of my experiences as a paid carer were depressing. A delightful Irish woman in her seventies who was allowed to leave hospital after a fall providing she had 24 hour care, was my first night duty. She wasn't able to go to the bathroom alone and every hour or so I was aroused from a near-comatose state (no sleeping is allowed) to help her to the commode. She was sweetest itself, always apologised for disturbing me and we drank cups of tea all night long.

My third role was to provide weekend meals for a frail little old lady living alone in the country. She had suffered a stroke and was wobbly on her legs. She loved gardening and I watered her plants. Again, she was a delight, totally appreciative.

But I must admit that if I don't come across another Zimmer frame, stair lift, commode or deaf aid it will not be much of a punishment.

Squatters should not be turned into criminals, a new group says

Lou Crisfield is petite and persuasive. She is a 25-year-old former squatter and a spokeswoman for Squatters' Action for Secure Homes, a body set up last December, to fight government proposals announced at the end of 1991, which would almost certainly criminalise squatting.

Squash, as it is known, faces the difficult task of promoting squatters' rights amid headlines such as "Filthy squatters smash home to bits" and "The day squatters invaded our home". Squash shares its offices, in north London, with the 14-year-old Advisory Service for Squatters. It also liaises with Shelter and New Horizon, the housing pressure groups, and with bodies such as the National Union of Students.

Ms Crisfield, a carpenter who works for Squash part-time, says the group's immediate aim is to reply to the government's consultation paper on changes to the law which would almost certainly make squatting a criminal offence.

Squash's long-term ambition, however, is to change the image of squatters as won't-pay scroungers who prefer to live for nothing than to pay their way. This stereotype belies the reality of the squatters' plight as homeless people with no choice, Ms Crisfield says.

Lorraine Wood, 22 years old and unemployed, has been a squatter since she was 18 and left her home in east London because of what she describes as "a difference of opinion" with her family. At the moment, she is squatting in a former old people's home in Islington, north London, with about 20 other people. She has been there for three months.

"I can't afford the deposit needed up front to rent a home," she says. What money she saves, she is squirrelling away to pay for a course on teaching English as a foreign language.

The chance of getting a council flat is remote for her as a single young person, who is therefore not classified as a priority category by the council. "To get on a council list, you have to have a permanent address," she says. "My sister, who has a child, and therefore has a better chance than me, has been on the waiting list for four years."

Wherever I lay my hat



Can't pay, would pay: Lou Crisfield working for squatters.

Most of her fellow squatters are single or students, Ms Wood says. But the squat will not survive for much longer. Islington council last week set a court date to reclaim possession of the building. Ms Wood and others like her are waiting for the bailiffs when they will leave peacefully, in search of a new squat.

Under the Criminal Law Act 1977, squatting is a criminal offence if it involves violence to gain entry, if a criminal act is committed to gain entry, or while inside, or if there is an act of trespass, on, for example, Ministry of Defence property. Otherwise, squatting is dealt with under civil law.

Squatting in vacant properties is a civil offence. Bringing a council court action to evict squatters is often slow and can cost householders up to £800.

Launching his consultation paper last October, Kenneth Baker, the home secretary,

said that existing legal remedies against squatting were "patently unsatisfactory". The paper suggests four options, from maintaining the status quo to making squatting a criminal offence.

But the most likely outcome of the consultation paper, Mr Baker made clear, is that the police would have unrestricted powers to enter residential or commercial property and arrest squatters, who would face six months in jail and a fine of up to £5,000.

Squash is fighting such changes. "We feel the law deals effectively with squatting at the moment," Ms Crisfield says.

"The government's alleged 'victims of squatting' are largely mythical. Private individuals are not deprived of their homes by squatters."

Government figures show that only three people were convicted under section 7 of the 1977 act in 1988 and only one in 1989.

But what of the approximately 10,000 civil law cases

a year brought against squatters? Such cases hardly ever involve home-owners, says Squash. Court lists reveal that private home owners are very rarely involved. "It's true that very rarely are homeowners squatted," says Mr Geoffrey Cutting, the chairman of the Small Landlords Association. "But there are dozens of cases of people whose vacant home is up for sale, and cases where someone has gone to hospital or who has died who are squatted. At the moment, the owner is put to great expense and time by having to go through these complicated procedures in the courts."

Most cases result from the 90 per cent of squatting which happens in unused public-sector housing and the 9 per cent of squatting involving commercial property. In these cases, the council, housing association, or commercial owner takes the squatter to court in order to evict them. Make squatting a criminal offence, and you will deny many squatters a chance to make their case to councils to be housed, Squash says.

Squatting families are routinely told by local authorities that they are "not homeless" and their housing applications are turned down.

Every squatter is, in fact, statutorily homeless under the Housing Act of 1985.

According to Squash, about one third of squatters are families with children. They say that a London housing survey in 1986, which showed that cases involving young children were negligible, is out of date.

Many squatters have been rehoused by councils after being taken to the civil courts. Cases can be adjourned for squatters to bring proceedings against the council for breach of statutory duty.

Few cases go beyond the first stage of judicial review, at which point the council usually assumes its obligations. Whether criminalisation will close off this process to squatters is a disputed point. In the longer term, Squash will attempt to promote the message that, as Ms Crisfield says: "For up to 50,000 people, squatting is not a problem; it's the solution, albeit temporary, to their homelessness."

RACHEL KELLY

New York, New York

WHERE in the world would you like to go on holiday? Europe, Asia, Fiji, Australia, Brazil, America? And would you like to take a partner along — free? *The Times* is offering a choice of first-class hotels throughout the world where you can stay with a friend, whose flights and hotel accommodation are free.

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"ONE belongs to New York instantly. One belongs to it as much in five minutes as in five years," wrote Thomas Wolfe. On that reckoning five days — or more if the diary and the budget allow — is ample time to conduct a serious affair with the greatest city in the world.

For New York, of course, read Manhattan. You've seen it in the movies but the first glimpse — preferably from over the river while driving in from JFK airport in one of those ridiculous stretch limos — will never cease to astonish. It is not that the lights are brighter or the skyscrapers higher than imagined. The sharp intake of breath is due simply to the sheer vitality, the "animal buoyancy" as *Anna Karenina* called it, which New York exudes.

Begin the first morning like a true tourist at the Empire State building, only a few blocks walk from our two featured hotels. There is a sound reason: the view is like an aerial photograph of the city, offering the perfect way to fix bearings, identify the main points of interest and plot routes between them. On a clear day — and few can resist humming *Alan Jay*



Empire State building: on a clear day you can see forever

Lerner's words when at the top — it is said you can see for 85 miles, which must be about as close to forever as the human eye can get.

Next, take the Circle Line boat for a three-hour trip around Manhattan Island, or, alternatively, the ferry to Staten Island for fine, close-up views of the Statue of Liberty and downtown Man-

hattan. At 50 cents for the return trip, the latter is the best bargain in the city.

Having acquired a grasp of the geography, explore. The famous yellow cabs are ubiquitous and the subways perfectly safe, at least during the day. But good walking shoes are a far better way to see the sights — and the grid system makes it that metropolitan

wonder, a city in which it is impossible to get lost.

Start exploring at the Rockefeller Center, again close by our chosen hotels. Comprising 19 buildings on a 22-acre site, it is nothing less than a city in miniature, with skyscraper offices, restaurants, cinemas and shops. In the middle of it all is an ice rink, where in winter New Yorkers glide and twirl day and night to the strains of Sinatra under a huge golden statue of Prometheus. No where perhaps better epitomises the "work hard, play hard" ethos that is New York.

A walk through Central Park, New York's green lung, is a must for a Saturday or Sunday morning, perhaps on the way to the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, the largest collection of works of art and antiquities in the western world.

For a contrast try the Frick Collection, a short walk down Fifth Avenue. The elegant mansion was lived in until the 1930s and the stunning pictures (Titian, Goya, Velasquez) are presented in a setting that retains the intimate feel of a private home.

Despite its cosmopolitan nature New York is a collection of villages, its character changing rapidly in the space of a few short blocks. Sample the bohemianism of Greenwich Village (but do not expect to find the new Bob Dylan or Joan Baez singing in the corner coffee shop), experience the freneticism of Wall Street and the financial district, browse in the classy antique shops of the upper east side and strut past the neon lights of Broadway. Take in the restaurants, the bars, the shops, all among the best the world can offer. Do not worry if you have never liked the New Yorkers you have met in London. On their own patch they are different again — a people, as Thomas Wolfe suggested, with a sense of their own belonging.

SATURDAY

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STEPHEN MARKESON

Oars well that ends well

Are the actors who race an Oxford eight in Alan Ayckbourn's new production any good? The former coach Daniel Topolski and this year's crew give their verdict

The sight was enough to make any self-respecting rowing coach walk out before the interval. Here was a play about a university rowing eight training for their big race — and there was no one in charge.

As a coach of some experience, I confess that I felt a little redundant at the beginning of *One Over The Eight*, the new Alan Ayckbourn directed play, in which the coach does not appear. At the risk of taking the play too seriously, I had always thought, erroneously it now transpires, that my role had been of some importance. But I needn't have worried. Saskia Wickham's slave-driving cox proved to be more than capable of performing both tasks. Besides, her provincial college crew of novices was so useless that only a saint or a masochist would have taken it on.

To assess Peter Robert Scott's play, now at the Oxford Playhouse, I took along the current Oxford squad, who are training for this year's Boat Race in April, to see what they made of this tale of a college crew preparing to race Oxford. "We'll lose by miles," one of the actors groaned early in the play. "Let's pull out now — with dignity."

"They'll be well and truly toasted," murmured one of the Oxford pros with evident satisfaction. Scatological, like the rest of us, about how "theatre" would stage our sport, he had been won over from the opening scene. How could we have doubted Ayckbourn's professionalism? He was, after all, the presiding Cameron Mackintosh professor of contemporary theatre at St Catherine's College, Oxford. So he understood the terrain.

The writer had realistically matched his rag-bag collection against Oxford's third eight. "We'll still lose by miles," wailed the cowardly novice. "A dead octopus has more vigour than you lot," retorted the vitriolic cox.

The technical advice from Matthew Mowbray, who is captain of boats at St Catherine's and who attended rehearsals at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough, where the play first opened, passed

the accuracy test early on. He had taken the actors out rowing on the river at York after two weeks of dry-land practising, and it was only then that they had realised how hard rowing was. One actor had done a little rowing before, and another, Jonathan Cake, had played rugby for Cambridge against Oxford. "I lost then, and damn it I'm still losing now — on stage, every night," he said.

The actors circuit-trained every day during rehearsals and it shows. "It got so competitive that we even started getting quite teetichy with each other over who sat where in the boat," Cake said.

The verdict from my colleagues was a thumbs up for the authentic acting, inter-squad dialogue and stage presentation of a sport that takes up over five hours of their lives each day.

We were all astonished to learn that the writer had never pulled an oar in anger, nor, indeed, had he ever been sporty enough to make him privy to the locker room banter which he records with such realism. These exchanges were the crowning glory of a play which had the Oxford men convulsed as they recognised many of their own crewmates in the characters.

"They got all that in-boat rivalry just right," said freshman Ed Hutton, an Old Etonian. "It's so true, especially when you get moved back up the boat and someone else moves down into your place. You see it as demotion."

I remember how we used to call it "bow and out" in my day. "Well, now it's the number three seat and we call it the ejector seat blues," said Boris Mavra, a Yugoslavian, morosely, as Jonathan Cake was moved back a seat. "And I'm rowing at three at the moment."

For 18-year-old Hutton there was a ring of truth when the cox told her crew: "They may be better than you, more skilful than you, and bigger and more powerful than you, but you're more bloody minded than they are." And that stropky Canadian stroke was our American president to a T, Hutton added.

Ayckbourn's rowers were perfect



Winning by a length: members of this year's Oxford squad (in blazers) say they recognised many crewmates in the characters played by the Playhouse rowers (wearing singlets)

college part-timers and marvellously convincing students. Even when the Oxford rowers met them after the show it was hard not to see them as hopelessly inadequate college rowers. I particularly enjoyed the cox saying to the weedy character Tim: "We've got to build up your strength, Tim. You know that a crew is only as good as its weakest link? Well, Tim, you're that link."

"The characters in the play were so like some of the guys in our squad," said Kingsley Poole, in his third year at Oxford. "But I thought some of the egos were a little too exaggerated." "No way," countered Kris Kobach, an American, and began listing the biggest egos in the squad. His crewmates nodded in agreement.

I, too, recognised some lovely characterisations of rowers from the various crews I have coached over the years. Actor Richard Long was ordered to stop eating. At 14st

(well, actually just over 14st 14lb) he was too fat. Oxford's 1986 president had similar troubles. And Matt Wood, in the current Oxford squad, sheepishly admitted: "Our coach wouldn't put me into a crew until I lost some weight."

The 40-day smoking habit of the character called Oliver reminded me of one dippy cox from a well-known public school who couldn't face the freezing hours on the river without his morning fag. And there were always the occasional heavy drinkers.

But the waiter at the restaurant we went to after the show was impressed enough to remark on the self-discipline of the Oxford squad boys as they stuck diligently to orange juice and Diet Cokes and slipped off to their beds well before midnight. "We're in the gym at seven tomorrow," they muttered.

One forgets the sacrifice needed to be a top-class athlete.

One Over The Eight faltered, though, when the unrelenting bantering ram lectures of Wickham's Sgt Major cox, often laced with clichéd messages about the dignity of suffering, wore her crews down to dumb obedience.

The audience, too, began to wilt under the onslaught. Unfortunately she was also at times half turned away towards her crew, rowing in their shell mounted on the stage, and we missed a lot of what she said — a result of transferring the play from the round in Scarborough to an art stage.

"We would never have taken all that from a cox," Kobach said. "They were much too nice to her. They just accepted it like sheep." Yes, but don't forget she had much more rowing experience than they did," Mavra said. "She'd coxed some top class crews."

"Well, if a cox tried to talk to me like that..."

"You walk a thin line as a female cox," said Oxford's new American cox, Kirsty Downing, with feeling. But they all felt their pulses quicken when Wickham launched into her final pre-race pep talk. "That really got to me," Mavra said. "The way they did the team spirit and the passion worked very well."

"We were very nervous tonight, knowing the crew were coming," Wickham said. "We've really enjoyed doing these parts but we were worried they wouldn't find us convincing." They also expected their crew-rousing chant, "Oxford, Oxford, nuts to you, bollocks to you", to cause trouble in the city of dreaming spires.

Ayckbourn was delighted with the Oxford squad's reaction. His biggest headache was getting the boat on stage. "No one realised the length of a rowing eight," he said.

"We planned for a 30ft boat, only to find they are twice that length." "It was very realistic, the way the boat was set up on stage," said Kobach. "I can't think of a better way to represent rowing in the theatre. And I think it would have spoilt it if they had won. But I didn't quite understand why the cox cried after the race."

A few years ago, Nick Kent, a former director of the Oxford Playhouse, asked me to collaborate with the writer Doug Lucie on a script about the tensions and pressures facing a varsity crew. It seems that Alan Ayckbourn and Peter Robert Scott have got there before us. I had thought that rowing was an impossible dramatic subject. But maybe *One Over The Eight* will spark off a craze for rowing themes. Perhaps our time has come.

■ Daniel Topolski coached the Oxford crew from 1972 to 1987

How to ring changes in your love life

Phone-dating is the latest way for Americans to find a new relationship. William Cash tries it out for himself

Los Angeles's trendy Golden Monkey Café was unusually packed recently — a sweaty throng of well-groomed young people sipping Californian charonney as they listened attentively to a speech. A birthday party? An office leaving party? A fashion show?

No. The 120 or so professionals were attending a "get-ready-for-romance" singles dating seminar entitled: "Everything You Always Wanted To Know About Writing A Phone-Dating Ad. But Were Afraid To Ask."

Phone-dating has become one of the most popular and successful ways for Americans to start new relationships. The classified pages of American newspapers and glossy magazines are full of advertisements for the phone-dating services that are starting to replace singles bars, health clubs and introduction agencies as a way of meeting the opposite sex.

The phenomenon should not be confused with phone-sex: neither should it be associated with the \$3-a-minute adult party lines that the US Supreme Court has recently ruled can only be made available to customers who specifically request their phone companies in writing. This, after thousands of under-age callers become addicted to the dial-a-porn lines.

In Nicholson Baker's new novel, *Vox*, two strangers who call an adult party line are so enticed by each other's voices that they start up an erotic conversation that lasts for 165 pages — and run up a bill of about \$5,000 (£2,700).

Phone-dating works like this. You browse through the 50-word personal ads buried at the back of a weekly newspaper such as *LA Weekly*, a variation on *Time Out*. To ensure that you don't make any mistakes, the ads are split up into various categories: "Women Seeking

Men"; "Men Seeking Women"; "Women Seeking Men"; and "She-Male". Each has a telephone box number to call if you are interested.

With phone-dating there are no embarrassing interviews, no match-making video sessions and no long application forms to fill in. The customer rings the telephone number quoted in the advertisement, listens to the personal details recorded on an answering machine, and if he or she likes the sound of the person on the message, leaves their own message and telephone number. The cost? About \$1.50 (83p) a minute.

This contrasts sharply with the rignarole involved in getting on the books of, say, the Helena International VIP Club of Beverly Hills. In the interests of security, the agency uses private detectives, psychoanalysis and handwriting experts and probes into your financial and medical history, all of which could end up costing \$20,000. While a date with Helena takes six weeks to set up, a phone-date can be fixed in half an hour.

While insisting that Helena caters for a very different clientele, president Joseph Lasman admits that phone-dating has some natural advantages. "No one likes to get rejected, and a rejection on the phone doesn't seem to count so much — you can laugh it off as a joke."

I left a message for a woman with a New York accent who described herself in *LA Weekly* as "Adventurous, Attractive, Amusing SF", seeking an "accomplice to explore the rest of the alphabet". She called me back within an hour. I suggested a drink later that night at the Beverly Hills Hotel. She readily agreed.

Her name was Linda. She was 35, divorced, about 5ft tall, and worked as an assistant librarian at UCLA. Her

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Get ready for romance: phone-dating has replaced singles bars and health clubs as a way to meet the opposite sex

'Her name was Linda. She worked as a librarian at UCLA and her idea of adventure was sitting at home reading Pinter'

thirties, divorced and clearly lonely. At about 10pm, she invited me back to her flat for a late supper.

We sat in a bare kitchen eating spaghetti and drinking a day-old bottle of Beaujolais. It was hardly the most romantic evening I had ever experienced. For a start (and I don't blame her), she insisted on keeping the front door of her apartment open — "for security reasons". After supper, she closed the door, put on a Bette Midler tape, and sat down next to me on the "love-seat", as two-seat sofas are called in America. I made my excuses and left.

A good pre-recorded message is the key to successful phone-dating," says

Nereda Gibbs, the president of Matchline, the leading phone-matchmaker service in southern California, which has more than 3,500 telephone clients, who each pay \$75 a month for the service.

"They are mainly doctors, Hollywood producers, lawyers and even judges who simply haven't the time to spend dating dozens of different people each week. Phone-dating is no longer taboo — people have so little adventure in their lives these days, they meet so few new people — our service fills this gap," Ms Gibbs claims.

Each client must have a university degree, and is vetted financially before being given an identity number.

They are also given tips on how to "sound your best" on the recorded message. Men are advised to give out as much information as possible about themselves, while women are told to keep personal details to the minimum, and sound a little mysterious. "Women usually like to have a reason before calling a man, while men like to let their imaginations run wild," Ms Gibbs says.

For the ultimate in exclusive dating, however, lonely hearts can call the Animal Lovers Connection, a phone-dating service for those with a particular affection for dogs and cats. Those who do not have any luck with their message can listen to a selection of "pet-stories".

Phone-dating is just one area of the highly lucrative, if quirky, dial-information industry, worth an estimated \$1.2 billion a year. The service was first used in 1980 when NBC asked viewers to call up with their preference after the Reagan v Carter presidential debate.

The range of numbers is now kaleidoscopic. Dial 976-Surf to find out beach conditions along 485 miles of the Californian coast, or call the Pope on 1-900-740-Pope and contribute to the world's first electronic collection plate by listening to a daily message from the Vatican at \$1.95 a minute.

Phone-dating services are now estimated to comprise 30 per cent of the dial-data industry. The new federal legislation requiring written permission for sexually explicit services is not expected to apply to phone-dating numbers. The Supreme Court ruling is being seen as the end of the line for the dial-a-porn industry. "As a practical matter, the industry is history," says Nick Selby, a lawyer in Palo Alto, California, who represents the information-providers' coalition, which operates such services.

But phone-dating could itself enter a new x-rated era in May, when the first full-colour video-telephone that can be plugged into a standard socket goes on sale for \$1,495. The only snag is that the camera displays images at a third of the speed of a standard television, making it look like a 1930s King Kong movie. Mr Selby says that phone-sex enthusiasts are unlikely to enjoy the experience. "At ten frames a second, it's gonna look pretty weird."

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Blood, toil, tears and Scotch

Matthew d'Ancona reports on a riddle wrapped in a medical mystery — how did Winston Churchill manage to save the world while drinking like a fish?

Lords are lordliest in their wine, according to Milton, but are statesmen more statesmanlike when they've sunk a few? Viewers of the BBC's television biography of Sir Winston Churchill may well have pondered this question last week, as they learnt that the man who won a war and made the cigar a totem of power was also a serious drinker, capable of downing quantities of alcohol that would incapacitate some people.

Never averse to a glass of hock over breakfast, in his late sixties the prime minister would drink a bottle of champagne at lunch, followed by a few brandies. After his rest, he would move on to Scotch and soda, and consume yet more champagne and cognac at dinner, returning to a steady drip of diluted whisky as he worked into the small hours. But Churchill's aides rarely saw him the worse for wear.

The roll-call of politicians with a taste for the hard stuff is long and glittering. Pitt the Younger, for example, was a fierce and often gout-ridden drinker, of whom one observer said that he "liked a glass of wine very well, and a bottle still better". Lord Asquith's love of brandy was such that he occasionally appeared unsteady in the Commons, while Ernest Bevin's secretaries complained that he used alcohol like a car uses petrol.

Among today's leaders, Boris Yeltsin is reputedly the most bibulous, often criticised for the Falstaffian lifestyle which distinguishes him so markedly from the abstemious Mikhail Gorbachev. But Churchill's sheer stature makes his drinking history more compelling and — for those campaigning to strip alcohol of its glamour — unsettling. Over the past decade, the Royal Colleges have recommended a safe weekly intake for men of no more than 21 units of alcohol, a total which Churchill must have exceeded every day. Assuming that Churchill drank two bottles of champagne and about ten shots of spirits a day his daily intake would have been 22 units.

"I'm astonished he could get away with it," says John Rae, the director of the Portman Group, which combats alcohol misuse. "He was brought up at a time when people drank a lot more than nowadays. I would worry if people took this to mean that you can drink a great deal and operate at work. They should in no circumstances treat him as a role model."

The image of the lion-hearted national hero as a seasoned toper certainly upsets current orthodoxies on the destructive impact of alcohol in the workplace. A survey conducted last year by the charity Alcohol Concern showed that drinkers take four times as many days off work as non-drinkers and that three-quarters of employers believe that alcohol misuse is a problem in their organisations.

Booze is hostile to honest graft. Yet Churchill's close acquaintance with the bottle does not appear to have impaired his judgment, his energies as a leader or his output as a historian. He lived to the age of 90, before succumbing to a stroke in January 1965.

How did he manage it? Experts on alcohol and its use say that tolerance can be nurtured in many different ways, depending on the drinker and his or her physical idiosyncrasies. The ratio of fluid to solid in an individual's body, for example, naturally affects the concentration of alcohol in the bloodstream and, therefore, susceptibility to drunkenness.

A stable routine can also play its part: the housewife knocking back the Tio Pepe at home every evening is arguably better placed to hold her drink than the travelling salesman drinking in different places and circumstances every day.

But the much-travelled Churchill never enjoyed a routine lifestyle, so it is unlikely that this was an important factor for him.

The drinker's choice of poison is important too, as certain drinks are better resisted by the body than others. The stomach treats alcohol as an irritant and produces mucus in response, slowing the process of



Still working at full capacity at the age of 89: Sir Winston Churchill in 1963, during a well-watered luncheon meeting with Paul Vardinoyannis, the Greek politician

absorption: sherry makes people get drunk more quickly than whisky, because it generates less protective mucus.

As it happens, Churchill's favourite tipple — Scotch and soda and champagne — were fizzy, and therefore absorbed quickly into the bloodstream. But he doubtless compensated for this by pacing himself. Sir David Hunt, one of his private secretaries, recalled that the prime minister "drank the weakest whisky and sodas I have ever known". Another, Sir John Colville, observed that "Winston's whisky was very much a whisky and soda. It was really a mouthwash."

Another important variable is the rate at which the body metabolises alcohol, turning it

into carbon dioxide and water. On average, a unit of alcohol an hour is processed but, according to Adrian Carr of the Alcohol Studies Centre, Paisley College, this figure can vary dramatically. "Most of the material is based on an average person who is 5ft 10in, 11 stone and perfectly proportioned. They don't talk about the fat slob and the skinny people."

Long years of drinking experience, he says, usually lurk behind an apparently heroic tolerance. "The main reason why Churchill wasn't rolling out to meet generals was probably long-term consumption. There's evidence to suggest that if you drink a lot for a long time it takes more to get you

drunk. Keeping yourself topped up means that the effect may be negligible."

Why men like Churchill take to drink is perhaps more puzzling a question than how they learn to take a skinful. If the apparently bullish prime minister approached alcohol as a means of warding off the "black dog" of depression which hounded him all his life, he did so in error. In spite of its ability to uplift in the short term, alcohol compounds emotional difficulties: studies show that in any population of problem drinkers there is likely to be a significant level of clinical depression, which often recedes when a subject goes on the wagon.

More probable is that Churchill's extraordinary intake of al-

cohol reflected his taste for excess, a tendency which the psychiatrist Anthony Storr characterises as his "need for the manic realm". According to legend, the great have great appetites and a tendency to addiction.

Churchill loved food, drink and fine cigars. The young Winston was beaten for stealing sugar, and an early school report described him as "greedy". Later in life, he fell prey to the pleasures of the wine cellar; his gargantuan appetites matched his gargantuan role in history.

Drink is also supposed to inspire man as it destroys him, providing what Dr Johnson called a "pick-lock" to the deepest recesses of the imagination. Perhaps, like writers from Horace to Fitzgerald, Churchill saw in the dark glass of the bottle the muse which would keep his creative instincts afloat.

"There's probably a correlation between excellence and drinking," says Simon Rae, the editor of the *Faber Book of Drink and Drinking*. "Drink can be the corset of a very fragile personality. But some people drink and some don't."

Hitler, he says, was a teetotaler, while Alexander the Great was a sozzler.

But medicine and psychiatry cannot hope to plumb the depths of Churchill's relationship with drink, a relationship in which he always claimed to exercise the upper hand. "All I will say is that I have taken more out of alcohol than alcohol has taken out of me," he once claimed.

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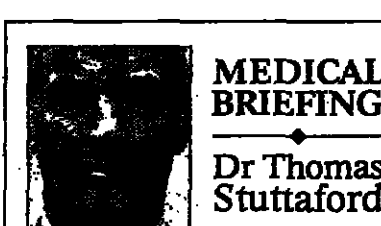
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Happily hooked on HRT

"IF MOST of the drugs issued by psychiatrists for the treatment of depression in women were dropped into the ocean, women would be healthier, and fish sicker," writes Mr John Studd, an expert on hormone replacement therapy (HRT), in *General Practitioner* magazine. But, in *The Lancet*, psychiatrists claim that HRT can become addictive and suggest that some patients come back to doctors more frequently for larger and larger doses.

The public, which has to take the treatment, is confused by the argument, but, as in most savage disagreements, both sides are right.

Any doctor treating a depressed middle-aged woman would be unwise not to consider that hormonal changes might be responsible, and if other signs, symptoms and blood tests confirm an approaching menopause, would be foolish not to try HRT. It would also be



MEDICAL BRIEFING
Dr Thomas Stuttford

absurdly optimistic not to appreciate that women, like men, suffer from endogenous depressions and that the biochemical upset could be as easily related to the brain as to the ovaries.

Many women will recover their old mood with nothing other than hormone replacement, and with it their sense of well-being. Recent research in Copenhagen has shown that middle-aged spread may regress (albeit so minimally that

HRT could never double as a slimming pill) they will look younger, their bones will be stronger and their sex life rejuvenated. It is hardly surprising that women are reluctant to return to the depressed state which prevailed before they took the hormones.

Other women whose depression is not hormone-linked will need to take the very antidepressant which Mr Studd would consign to the deep. A report in the *Journal of Psychiatry* by Dr Stewart Montgomery of St Mary's Hospital, London, stresses the need for antidepressant treatment of this sort to be continued for at least six months, as if treatment is stopped too soon, there is a 50 per cent chance of relapse or recurrence. The advent of the newer and safer antidepressants of the 5HT reuptake inhibitors group has made this a less daunting task for the patient, and a less worrying one for the doctor.

Death from peanuts

PEOPLE have heard of aflatoxin poisoning from mouldy peanuts which is a problem in the third world. They may even be aware that Cerumenol, the drops used to loosen earwax before syringing, is made of peanut oil and should not be used if the ear is at all eczematous. But the most devastating effect of peanuts, their ability to cause catastrophic anaphylaxis, collapse from an acute allergic reaction in a previously sensitised patient, is little appreciated.

The danger of peanuts can be quite as severe as that found in those who suffer from allergy to penicillin, bee-stings, shellfish, foreign protein found in some injections, and some other drugs — such as iron injections, anti-inflammatory agents (including aspirin, in one recent case the patient had taken a combination of aspirin and peanuts), heparin (an anticoagulant) and neuromuscular blocking agents (used to achieve relaxation in anaesthesia). This was tragically illustrated by the death of the Marlborough girl 30 minutes after she had eaten a pastry containing traces of peanuts.

Anaphylactic collapse is caused by a combination of swelling of the tissues around the throat, so that the airways are obstructed, by bronchospasm — the acute wheeze as the bronchial tubes go into

spasm — and by a catastrophic fall in blood pressure resulting from dilation of the main blood vessels.

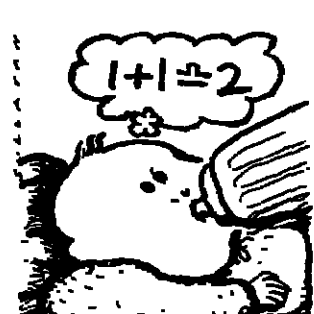
The patient's symptoms come on suddenly, usually within 15 minutes of exposure to the allergen. Usually the patient will be aware of their sensitivity to the substance, but will not understand how dramatic the reaction can be. They become restless, flushed, the heart races, they feel faint, find difficulty in breathing and wheeze, sneeze and cough. They may vomit. The face swells, often accompanied by a urticarial rash (like nettle rash). If the circulation fails, death results from heart failure.

Adrenalin, given intramus-

cularly at once, is the only reliable treatment. The patient must be laid flat, with the feet raised, and immediately given an injection of between 0.5ml and 1ml of adrenalin at a strength of one in a thousand. The dose is repeated at ten-minute intervals until the patient recovers. Thereafter, intravenous antihistamines or steroids can be useful, but their action is far too slow — measured in hours rather than minutes — to treat acute collapse.

Patients who have previously had a severe reaction to any allergen can, like President Bush, who is sensitive to bee stings, always carry an injection of adrenalin already prepared and drawn up into a syringe.

Brain food



MOTHERS who are unable to breastfeed their babies have been worried by the report in *The Lancet* which showed that very premature babies who were fed on mother's milk tended to do slightly better academically in childhood than those who had had to rely on cow's milk.

Some of the deficiency in cow's milk may be explained by an absence of complex fats including docosahexaenoic acid and arachidonic acid which are necessary for the development of brain cells. It seems that manufacturers may soon be adding these fats to baby milks.

Mothers should remember that the survey involved tiny premature infants, rather than those born as they usually are, healthy at full-term. Women who have relied upon the bottle to feed their children should not think that they have condemned them to wear a dunce's cap forever.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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Errors in ITC paper insufficient to justify quashing decision

Regina v Independent Television Commission, Ex parte Television South West

Before Lord Donaldson of Lynton, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Nolan and Lord Justice Steyn

Judgment February 5

Television South West were not justified in their claim that the Independent Television Commission had acted unfairly in breach of a legitimate expectation that it would not apply more stringent criteria to their key revenue assumptions than those mentioned in its invitation to apply for regional Channel 3 licences.

Errors in a staff assessment paper considered by members of ITC in deciding to reject TSW's application did not critically affect them so as to require the court to set aside its decision on the ground of misdirection.

The Court of Appeal so stated, the Master of the Rolls dissenting, in dismissing TSW's application for judicial review of ITC's decision to reject TSW's application. It was not satisfied that TSW could maintain the proposed service throughout the licence period.

Mr Gordon Pollock, QC and Mr Geoffrey Vos for TSW; Mr Pannick for ITC; Mr Thomas Morrison, QC and Mr William J. Wood for West Country.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS

The Master of the Rolls said that one of the duties of the ITC was that of securing the provision of a nationwide system of television broadcasting services (Channel 3) to be structured on a regional basis.

Under the licensing procedure each licence was for a 10-year period and applicants for licences were to make sealed bids of an index-linked annual sum payable to ITC on behalf of the public.

Before a licence might be awarded, the ITC had to be satisfied that the conditions of section 16 were met as to quality of service and, by section 16(1)(b), that the applicant would be able to maintain the service throughout the period of the licence.

Law Report February 7 1992 Court of Appeal

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By section 17 the licence for any particular region was to be awarded to the applicant who, having passed the section 16 tests, submitted the highest bid.

TSW failed the sustainability condition, so that although the highest bidder, the licence was not awarded to them but to West Country which succeeded on both quality and sustainability conditions.

Licensing procedure

In November 1990 a consultative draft of an invitation to apply for licences was published.

No announcement was made as to ITC's estimate of the growth rate of total television advertising revenue (NAR) over the licence period 1993-2002. The only

information available was an article in ITC's journal *Adwaves* in which the personal conclusion of the writers was that an average figure of 4 per cent would be appropriate and consistent with the view of other forecasters. In particular with that of the National Economic Research Associates (NERA) at 4.6 per cent.

ITC adopted a 4 per cent figure although recognising that it was on the low side. That was not known to the applicants.

In February 1991 ITC published the invitation to apply for licences. By the closing date of May 15, 40 applications had been received, which were a public interest in ensuring that the prescribed method of allocating licences be followed whatever methods might be made of that method.

Invitation to apply

Certain paragraphs of the invitation to apply dealt with the need for the regional Channel 3 licences to conclude an arrangement on sharing the costs of network programmes in accordance with section 39 of the Act and that such arrangements would need to reflect the different sizes of such licences and their different earning power in the sense of profit potential.

It suggested on an indicative basis a complex formula which would result in costs being shared on the basis largely of "qualifying revenue share".

The paragraphs relating to maintaining the services stated that the key questions concerned the financial resources of the applicant, the following financial information being sought for the full term of the licence: namely, full and loss projections, cash flow projections and projected balance sheets.

It further stated: "The applicant is asked to declare and to justify certain key assumptions he has made in formulating his business plan. The ITC will, *inter alia*, seek to satisfy itself that the assumptions underlying the applicant's forecasts have been thoroughly considered, are consistent and are credible."

The invitation then set out five specific sensitivity tests to which the applicants' attention was directed.

The draft invitation had drawn significant comment from TSW. His Lordship referred to a letter put by them to ITC pointing out that the critical question of what evaluation criteria would be applied by ITC remained unanswered and asking how would ITC decide whether revenue or cost projections were realistic, and whether the applicant's assumptions were credible. Answer had not been given.

NERA had also written to ITC that in its view ITC could not assist applicants by explaining in more detail how it intended to evaluate the financial proposals presented. NERA recommended that the evaluation should be

concentrated on the methodology used as well as on the forecasts.

TSW's application for a licence was based on their own experience as the independent licensee of the region and on the use of the econometric model produced by NERA and advice from the equally respectable Henley Centre for Forecasting.

Its features were (a) their forecast of an average of 5.3 per cent (NAR) over the licence period, (b) a substantial reduction in costs as compared with TSW's costs in the years before the application was made and (c) an indication that in principle they had secured loan facilities from Barclays Bank to the extent of £10 million designed to overcome potential cash flow difficulties in the earlier years of the licence.

It was clear that their forecasts were credible, that nothing worse befell them than was contemplated by the sensitivity tests, that the networking arrangements were as indicated in the invitation and that the loan facilities were forthcoming. TSW's very large bid would still not have prevented them making a respectable profit over the licence period as a whole.

There were four sources from which it was possible to ascertain why ITC had not secured loan facilities from Barclays Bank to the extent of £10 million designed to overcome potential cash flow difficulties in the earlier years of the licence.

TSW's application met the sustainability condition. In many ways the most important were the contemporaneous staff assessment papers of 1990 and 1991 and 2001 read with the members' agreement to record in the minutes any reasons other than those summarised in the papers.

The latter staff assessment paper focused on a comparison among five applications in respect of which an issue arose as to sustainability. In the case of TSW it suggested that revenue projections were optimistic, that the cash bid in absolute terms and as a percentage of revenue was one of the highest and that TSW was proposing to bid a sum annually which very closely approached its 1992 balance sheet value.

His Lordship considered that the ITC was not mechanically applying test such as a 4 per cent NAR growth rate. It was considering how close to the margin of credibility and prudence the applicants were going on the footing that the requirement of sustainability was more easily met if the margin was small only in one or two respects than if it was small in all or most respects.

Role of court

The role of the court was to consider whether the licensing procedure was fairly conducted, and whether ITC correctly directed itself as to the law and as to the facts.

If it erred, the court then had to exercise a judicial discretion as to whether or not to set aside the decision and if so what relief see *R v Monopolies and Mergers Commission, Ex parte Agip Group plc* (1991) 1 WLR 763, 774-775, 778-779, 782-783.

TSW's primary complaint

His Lordship referred to *R v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Brind* (1991) AC 696, 722 where Lord Diplock said that the requirements of grounds for judicial review in *Council of Civil Service Unions v Minister for the Civil Service* (1985) AC 374, 401, he had warned against the strict categorisation of separate heads of relief.

His Lordship recently had detected a tendency to regard "legitimate expectation" as a separate and perhaps additional ground for judicial review. It was not. It was a particular aspect of natural justice or fairness which depended on and might be included in Lord Diplock's "procedural impropriety".

It was clear that if the invitation was misleading and as a result TSW made an application on a basis they would not otherwise have adopted, they suffered an injustice which the law should if possible redress. It was sufficient if a public authority led the complainant to believe that it would continue to act in a particular way unless and until it gave notice to the contrary.

It had also been said that the words "and/or conduct" had to indicate an intention to act in a particular way clearly, unambiguously and without relevant qualification; see *R v IRC, Ex parte MFK Underwriting Agents Ltd* (1990) 1 WLR 1545, 1569 per Lord Justice Bingham.

Where his Lordship ventured to think that Lord Justice Bingham's judgment might be misunderstood was when he said that if in private law a body would be in breach of contract in so acting, a public authority should be in no better position. The doctrine of legitimate expectation was rooted in fairness.

That was plainly right, but there was a risk that it might be read as importing into public law concepts of private law. It was a similar caveat needed to be entered in relation to *R v IRC, Ex parte Preston* (1985) AC 835, 866-867 per Lord Templeman. The test in public law was fairness not an adaptation of the law of contract or estoppel.

His Lordship was satisfied that TSW's primary complaint was not made out. The evidence did not show that the submission that ITC had based its decision on a covert sensitivity test.

TSW knew that ITC was required by statute to satisfy itself as to the sustainability requirement. They had studied the draft invitation and had appreciated that ITC was not revealing what evaluation criteria it would apply to the business plans.

TSW also knew that the ITC would seek to satisfy itself that the assumptions underlying the applicants' forecasts had been thoroughly considered, were consistent and were credible. But the inclusion of the words "inter

alia" were a clear indication that that was not an all-embracing description of the approach which the ITC would adopt.

TSW were not therefore justified in expecting that ITC would limit itself to considering whether the applicants' forecasts met the requirements of the invitation read with the sensitivity tests.

TSW's secondary complaint was that the staff paper (1991) was flawed on account of its failure to assess their bid fairly or accurately, was in his Lordship's judgment, made out.

It was a fundamental requirement of ITC's approach to its task that the resulting staff assessments, while properly expressing the staff views and advice should contain, full, fair and balanced accounts of the evidence and issues. Paper (1991) did not meet that requirement in a number of ways.

The ITC was not, or should not have been, so preoccupied in deciding whether TSW's bid was prudent from the point of view of the shareholders. Nor should it have been concerned with whether TSW wished to maintain the service. It became unexpectedly unprofitable.

The only relevant question for ITC was that stemming from section 16(1)(b), whether members were satisfied that TSW would be able to maintain the service. That was required to be satisfied not to the criminal standard of proof but on a balance of probabilities.

In his Lordship's view the paper (1991) did not state the case for as well as against the TSW application fairly, fully and with proper balance.

His Lordship therefore considered that there were reasonable grounds for considering that TSW's bid did not receive the fair evaluation to which it was entitled under the Act read with the invitation. His Lordship would have set aside the decision.

LORD JUSTICE NOLAN

agreed that the primary complaint was not made out.

With regard to the secondary complaint, it had to be borne in mind that the minutes of the meetings held on October 10 and 11, 1991, at which the decision was taken, made record of no reservations about the contents of paper (1991).

His Lordship agreed with the Master of the Rolls that the paper might be criticised as failing in a number of respects to provide a balanced picture of the TSW bid but he was unable to accept that the deficiencies might be assumed to be reflected in the minds of the

members of ITC. It could not be assumed that the members' discussions were limited in any way by the contents of the staff assessments.

His Lordship attached importance to the fact that there had never been any suggestion by TSW of dishonesty, unfairness, and that the evidence accepted that the shortcomings in the paper could not be shown to have had a critical effect on the ultimate decision.

That accorded with His Lordship's view. He would dismiss the application.

LORD JUSTICE STEYN

concurring in the result with Lord Justice Nolan, said that the staff assessment paper (1991) dealt inadequately and unfairly with the issue of TSW's growth figure.

It seemed to his Lordship that certain of the misleading comments was such an obvious distortion of the true position that the experienced members of ITC would probably not have been misled by it. On balance, it was not established that ITC's decision was influenced by the unfair presentation in the paper, so that that challenge failed.

Solicitors: Travers Smith Braithwaite Allen & Overy; Goodman Derrick & Co.

Council can evict trespasser without housing enquiry

Regina v Barnet London Borough Council, Ex parte Grumbridge

Before Mr Justice Otton

[Judgment January 30]

There was no requirement or statutory obligation on a local authority to determine whether an admitted trespasser was homeless or in priority housing need before deciding whether to seek an order for possession of its own property from him.

Mr Justice Otton so held in the Queen's Bench Division granting an application by Ronald Frederick Grumbridge for judicial review of the respondent council's decision to seek a possession order on the council flat where he lived.

Mr David Watkinson for the applicant; Mr Joseph Harper for the respondent.

MR JUSTICE OTTON said that until March 1988 Mr Grumbridge had occupied the flat as a licensee of the tenant. The tenant had subsequently moved out and the council had served notice to quit.

The applicant had consulted solicitors who wrote to the council pointing out that he was homeless

BBC 1

- 6.00 **Coffee** (26259) 6.30 **BBC Breakfast News** (2271693)
 9.05 **Kilroy**, Robert Kilroy-Silk chairs a studio discussion on a topical subject (441218) 9.50 **Hot Chefs**. More metro-type food from Anthony Worrall Thompson (5341194)
 10.00 **News**, regional news and weather (1018007) 10.05 **Playdays**. For the very young (7) (1961128) 10.25 **Pingu**. Animated adventures of a clumsy penguin (7) (6101124) 10.35 **No Kidding**. Family quiz game hosted by Mike Smith with Kate Copstick (5) (576858)
 11.00 **News**, regional news and weather 11.05 **Travel Show Extra**. Reports on Turkey in Devon, Hungary's Lake Balaton, the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire and the Aeolian Islands of southern Italy (757553) 11.30 **People Today** introduced by Mervyn Stoppard and Russell Grant (3251738)
 12.20 **Peabody MME**. Music and chat presented by Alan Titchmarsh (5) (5150200) 12.55 **Regional News** and weather (9257842)
 1.00 **Cave O'Clock News** and weather (58842) 1.30 **Neighbours**. (Ceefax) (5) (50379113)
 1.50 **Film: The Suburban**. Code Name "Mortuary" (1985, b/w) starring Martin Brando and Yul Brynner. Heavy-going second world war drama about a German army deserter, hiding out in India, who is discovered by British intelligence and forced into helping capture a Nazi cargo ship. Directed by Bernhard Wicki (2113466)
 2.00 **Stits**. Simon Preece and Caitlin Easterby with ideas on recycling household junk into useful objects (610945) 4.05 **Jackanory**. David Healy with the last part of Stanley in Space (5533736) 4.20 **The Further Adventures of Super Ted** (7) (512053) 4.30 **Hanger 17** presented by Mickey Hutton. The guests are magician Jeff McKridle, comedian Steve Rawlings and the band Take That (5) (2516755)
 4.55 **Newround Extra**. Terry Baddoo reports from Albertville in the French Alps on the eve of the Winter Olympics (3255123) 5.05 **George Hill**. Children's series (5) (5718217)
 5.35 **Neighbours** (7) (Ceefax) (5) (783741). Northern Ireland: Inside Ulster
 6.00 **Six O'Clock News** with Peter Sissons and Anna Ford. (Ceefax) Weather (804)
 6.30 **Regional News** (484). Northern Ireland: Neighbours
 7.00 **Women** (5) (526626)
 7.35 **Harry and the Hendersons**. Comedy series about a suburban American family who adopt a large creature after accidentally wounding it on a weekend trip to the country. (Ceefax) (5) (422945)
 8.00 **Grace and Favour**. Camp comedy with the staff of Grace Brothers featured in country hotel (5) (3303)
 8.30 **Caught in the Act**. Shane Richie introduces another selection of home movie disasters. (Ceefax) (5) (9007)
 9.00 **Nine O'Clock News** with Martin Lewis. (Ceefax) Regional news and weather (820)



Unrequited love: Adam Faith and Zoë Wanamaker (9.30pm)

- 9.30 **Love Hurts**. Comedy drama from the *Birds of a Feather* team of Laurence Marks and Maurice Gran starring Adam Faith as a self-made millionaire who falls for idealistic charity worker (Zoë Wanamaker) but finds his passion is not reciprocated. (Ceefax) (5) (552622)
 10.20 **Snooker**. The last quarter-final of the Benson and Hedges Masters. Introduced by Eamonn Holmes from the Wembley Conference Centre (794668)
 11.20 **Film: Slither** (1973).
 ● **CHOICE**: A delightfully unorthodox comedy-thriller sends ex-convict James Caan rattling across California on the trail of hidden loot in the company of kooky Sally Kellerman, toothy Louise Lasser and villainous Peter Boyle, with a couple of black mobile homes in creepy pursuit. The enigmatic script by W.D. Richter sets the tone for an engaging film which successfully welds together a variety of styles and moods and is enriched by superb photography from the *Easy Rider* cameraman Laszlo Kovacs. *Slither* was the directing debut of Howard Zieff, a recruit from American television. Zieff's handling is impeccable, effortlessly switching from hard-edged suspense to deflating slapstick and working in a series of movie parodies which are clever but never forced. After this fine start Zieff went on to make *House Calls* with Walter Matthau and Glenda Jackson and *Private Benjamin* with Goldie Hawn (323718). Northern Ireland: SportsScene 11.45-12.55am *Film: The Carey Treatment* 12.55am *Weather* (5693934)

BBC 2

- 6.00 **Breakfast News** (2630397)
 8.15 **Westminster**. A round-up of business from both Houses (565521)
 9.00 **News on 2**. Educational programmes
 2.00 **News** and weather (108393) followed by *Words and Pictures*. Reading for five to seven-year-olds (7425225) 2.15 **Weekend Outlook**. Open University presenter (573558)
 2.20 **Sport on Friday** introduced by Helen Rollason. Snooker: the third quarter-final of the Benson and Hedges Masters; highlights of the AT and T tournament from Pebble Beach; Winter Olympics: a preview of Sunday's men's downhill; Cricket: highlights of the second day's play in the final Test between New Zealand and England in Wellington. Includes news and weather at 3.00 and 3.55 (5661823)
 5.05 **Behind the Headlines** presented by Shyama Peters (5) (5714858)
 5.35 **The Clothes Shop**. Includes tips for shopping on a shoestring and travel on a large discount clothing and footwear store (7) (583723)
 6.00 **Thunderbirds**. Cult puppet adventures created by Gerry Anderson. (Ceefax) (524910)
 6.50 **Dr. White (b/w)**. Episode two of a five-part adventure *The Mind Robber*, first shown in 1968, starring Patrick Troughton as the doctor and Fraser Hines (300484)
 7.15 **100%**. Teenage magazine series. This week's edition includes conversations with young ME sufferers (752649) (5)
 8.00 **Public Eye**. Out of Line, Out of Reach? Martin Bashir investigates the police disciplinary system. Senior police officers, lawyers and claimants all give their views (1842)
 8.30 **Old Garden, New Gardeners**. Geoff Hamilton and Gary Search tackle garden boundaries for the novice gardener. (Ceefax) (7649)
 9.00 **Victoria Wood as Seen on TV**. More from the comedienne's first series, shown in 1985. Comedian songs, monologues, sketches and the wonderful spoof *Accompaniment*. With Julie Walters, Celia Imrie, Duncan Preston, Susie Blake and Patricia Routledge. (Ceefax) (8222)



Actions speak louder than words: director Oliver Stone (9.30pm)

- 9.30 **Arena: Oliver Stone**.
 ● **CHOICE**: The one thing missing from a timely portrait of the director of JFK is a rehash of the uproar that has broken out around that film. Instead of yet another debate about who really killed President Kennedy we get a solid background on Stone's career, built on traditional film around clips and interviews. Stone himself is very good value, not least when he adopts his characteristic play of responding to a tricky question with a long silence. For those even moderately acquainted with the subject there will be few surprises, partly because Stone has put so much of himself in his work. In *Vietnam* film *Platoon* is not just vaguely autobiographical but it is account to be believed, virtually a blow-by-blow account. Stone's French mother contributes usefully to the programme, while cinema collaborators such as Michael Douglas and Charlie Sheen add their love-hate tributes (87755)
 10.30 **Newswatch** presented by Peter Snow (52504)
 11.15 **What the Papers Say**. With Robert Fox of the *Daily Telegraph* (842120). *What the Papers Say* 11.20 *What the Papers Say* 11.30 *Scrumptious*. Iain MacIntyre examines the work of parliamentary committees (54718) 12.00 *Weather* (7280578)
 12.05am *Film: Strange Place to Meet* (1988) starring Catherine Deneuve and Gérard Philipe. French drama about a wife, dumped in a lay-by by her husband after an argument, who forms a romantic attachment with a cantankerous doctor. A thinning piece is lifted by excellent period costumes. Directed by François Dupeyron. English subtitles (433088)
 1.40 **Behind the Headlines** (7) (538863). Ends at 2.15

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ITV

- 6.00 **TV-am** (5643597)
 8.25 **Keynotes**. Music game for teams, hosted by Alastair David (1453539) 8.55 **Thames News** (442736)
 10.00 **The Times ... The Place ...** Topical discussion series (5015295)
 10.40 **This Morning**. Magazine on family matters introduced by Richard Madeley and Judy Farnham. Today's edition includes fashion, hair and make-up advice; and *Play It for Me* for would-be musicians (5115522)
 12.10 **Rainbow**. Young children's entertainment (2221465)
 12.30 **News** with John Suckett (Oracle) Weather (567823) 1.10 **Thames News** (5326206)
 1.20 **Home and Away**. Australian family drama serial. (Oracle) (5773273) 1.50 **Country Practice**. A heartwarming drama serial set in a small Australian outback town (5) (5214349)
 2.20 **Highway to Heaven**. The late Michael Landon stars in this heartwarming drama series as an angelic being earning his wings by helping wronged souls on Earth. In this episode he comes to the aid of a distressed Vietnam war veteran who is fighting a bigger battle now than he is back home (802842) 3.20 **Thames News** (5326206)
 3.55 **Cartoon** featuring *Peter Pig* (7) (7405911) 4.05 **Tiny Toon Adventures**. Cartoon (563674) 4.25 **Truckers**. Animated adventure series. With the voices of Joe McGann and Sir Michael Hordern (554858) 4.40 **Woolly**. Comedy series about a boy who keeps on turning into a dog. (Oracle) (5) (1240571)
 5.10 **Home and Away** (7) (Oracle) (5637755)
 5.40 **Home and Away** (7) (Oracle) (5637755)
 5.55 **6 O'Clock News** presented by Frank Bough and Joanna Sheldon. Among the guests are actress Lysette Anthony and chef Ken Hom (577551) 6.55 **The Day**. With Jo, a Greenwich mother of triplets, as she prepares to help them celebrate their second birthday (525465)
 7.00 **Family Fortunes**. Quiz game show for families, hosted by Les Dennis (56202)
 7.30 **Coronation Street**. (Oracle) (736)
 8.00 **Watching**. Last in the romantic comedy series starring Emma Way and Paul Brown. (Oracle) (5) (5668)



Second time lucky? Lynda Bellingham, James Bolam (8.30pm)

- 8.30 **Second Thoughts**. Shrewdly-observed comedy starring James Bolam and Lynda Bellingham as a couple contemplating marriage for the second time. (Oracle) (5) (5213)
 9.00 **The Good Guys**. A gentle comedy-drama following the misadventure of two men who share a home and the same name. In this episode, written by John Fortune, the two Guys are drawn to a Scottish castle by tales of ghosts and hidden treasure. Starring Nigel Havers, Keith Barron and, this week, Jenny Agutter. (Oracle) (2129)
 10.00 **News at Ten** with Julia Somerville and Fiona Armstrong. (Oracle) Weather (410194) 10.35 **LWT News** and weather (40745)
 10.40 **The London Programme**. Trevor Phillips looks at what lies in store for Alexandra Palace in north London (381914)
 11.15 **Loose Cannon**. American detective series starring Shadow Stevens (830723)
 12.05am *Film: My Riviera*. Joan Collins talks about her new home in the south of France (5734717)
 12.40 **Freestyle Skating**. A look at the sport that makes its official debut in the Winter Olympics (562062)
 1.05 **The James Whale Radio Show**. The acerbic chat show host insults another clutch of phoned-in (5225088)
 2.10 **American Gladiators**. Feats of strength and ingenuity for both sexes (3300040)
 3.10 **Cinema4Africa**. The latest movie news from the United States (577278) 3.40 **Home and Away** (7) (Oracle) (5637755)
 4.40 **Kojak**. The New York policeman faces a discredited colleague whom he is helping to clear. Starring Telly Savalas (7530088)
 5.30 **ITN Morning News** with Phil Roman (91205). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 **Channel 4 Daily** (5647939) 9.25 **News** (54844281)
 12.00 **The Paradise**. Program presented by Sarah Baxter. Includes Sir Robin Day interviewing the foreign secretary Douglas Hurd (51129)
 12.30 **Business**. The latest news from the world's business centres (56007)
 1.00 **Seaside Street**. Pre-school learning series from the United States. The guest is the actor Robin Williams (5352)
 2.00 **Film: Santa Fe Trail** (1940, b/w) starring Errol Flynn, Raymond Massey, Olivia de Havilland and Ronald Reagan. Western high on vigour and low on historical accuracy with Reagan as Custer and Massey as the anti-slavery campaigner John Brown who is somehow ended up as the villain. Directed with his usual professionalism by Michael Curtiz (5642)
 4.00 **Travelogue**. A repeat of Wednesday's programme in which Lady Valerie Soff and Mrs Adua Pavarotti explore the cultural delights of the Italian city of Bologna. (Teletext) (5) (465)
 4.30 **Countdown**. Another round of the words and numbers game, hosted by Richard Whitley (5) (649)
 5.00 **The Falklands War**. A repeat showing of Monday's final programme in the series examining the facts behind the Argentinean invasion of the Falklands. (Teletext) (533)
 6.00 **Happy Days**. Nostalgic comedy about high school days in 1950s Milwaukee. Starring Henry Winkler and Ron Howard (542)
 6.30 **Tonight with Jonathan Ross**. The guests are Caribbean head Rusty Lee and comedian Rowland Rivin in the guise as head of the British Winter Olympics team. Music is provided by the Canadian band Corby and the Juice Figs and, with their latest single "The Statue Got Me High", They Might Be Giants (5) (194)
 7.00 **Channel 4 News** with Jon Snow and Zennab Badawi. (Teletext) Weather (563904)
 7.50 **First Newscast** (565674)
 8.00 **Brookside**. Soap set in a Merseyside close. (Teletext) (5) (5910)
 8.30 **Outblast**. The newspaper sports quiz continues with the sports desk of the Mail on Sunday against their counterparts from the *Sunday Express* (5) (5845)
 9.00 **Cheers**. Award-winning American comedy series set in a Boston bar (4558)
 9.30 **How Do You Garden Grow?** Exceptional series in which Philip Wood and David Wilson explore the unsung private gardens of Ireland. Today they are in the Dalkey, Co Dublin, garden of Brian Wood which is heavily influenced by oriental design and content (43741)
 10.00 **Dream On**. Sometimes very funny adult comedy series starring Brian Benben as a publisher who is 30 years trying to adjust to single status after his 12-year-old marriage ends in divorce. This week he refuses to listen to his friend's warnings when he starts to date an old flame. (Teletext) (5) (418735)
 10.35 **Whose Line Is It Anyway?** presented by Clive Anderson. Improvised comedy sketch show. With Tony Slattery, Josie Lawrence, Paul Merton and the Frantics (5) (525276)
 11.05 **The Word**. Showbiz magazine series (5) (735842)



Super troupers: the pop group Abba down under (12.05am)

- 12.05am **Film: Abba: The Movie** (1977). A documentary record of the Swedish pop group's Australian tour. Directed by Lasse Hallstrom (528224)
 1.50 **Tonight with Jonathan Ross**. See 6.30 (7) (5) (512553). Ends at 2.30

ITV VARIATIONS

ANGLIA
 As London except: 2.30pm-3.15 *Mellick* (5272649) 5.10-5.40 *Coming of Age* (5627765) 6.00 *Home and Away* (5659245) 6.30-7.00 *Anglia* (123243) 10.40 *Central News* (565129) 11.40 *Out of Duty* (518194) 12.30-1.05am *Midnight* (7881972)

BORDER
 As London except: 1.50pm-1.55 *Assault on the Marston* (745) 4.00 *London* (5627765) 6.00 *Home and Away* (5659245) 6.30-7.00 *Take the High Road* (5627765) 10.40 *Up Country* (523464) 11.10 *Beauty and the Beast* (74571) 12.10-1.05am *Phil MacKenzie* (5627765) 1.10-1.15 *Central News* (565129) 1.15-1.20 *Central News* (565129) 1.20-1.25 *Central News* (565129) 1.25-1.30 *Central News* (565129) 1.30-1.35 *Central News* (565129) 1.35-1.40 *Central News* (565129) 1.40-1.45 *Central News* (565129) 1.45-1.50 *Central News* (565129) 1.50-1.55 *Central News* (565129) 1.55-2.00 *Central News* (565129) 2.00-2.05 *Central News* (565129) 2.05-2.10 *Central News* (565129) 2.10-2.15 *Central News* (565129) 2.15-2.20 *Central News* (565129) 2.20-2.25 *Central News* (565129) 2.25-2.30 *Central News* (565129) 2.30-2.35 *Central News* (565129) 2.35-2.40 *Central News* (565129) 2.40-2.45 *Central News* (565129) 2.45-2.50 *Central News* (565129) 2.50-2.55 *Central News* (565129) 2.55-3.00 *Central 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